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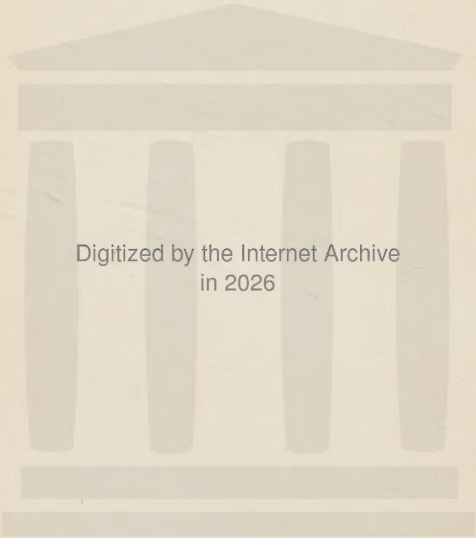
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HISTORICAL BIOGRAPHIES

EDITED BY

REV. M. CREIGHTON, M.A.

LATE FELLOW AND TUTOR OF MERTON COLLEGE, OXFORD

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH

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With Maps and Plans. Small 8vo.

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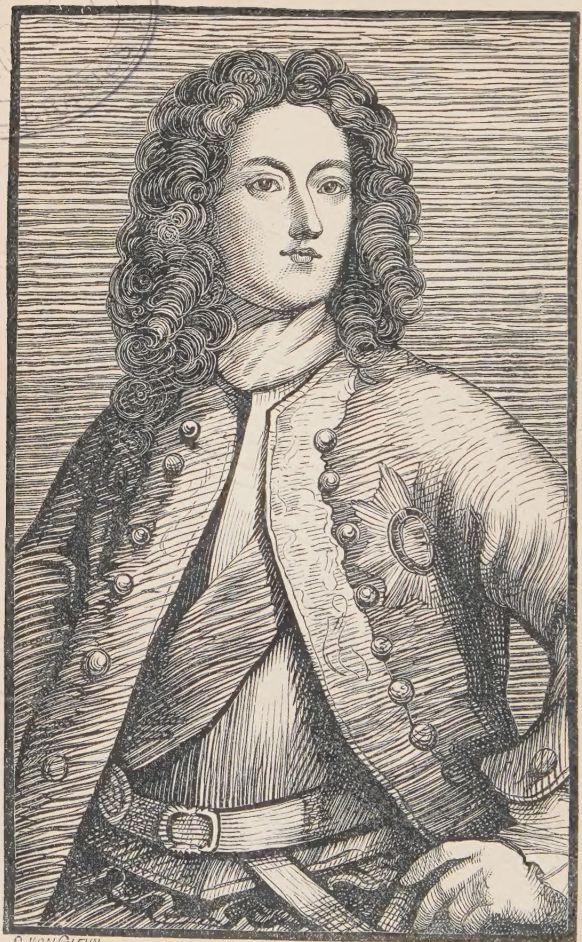

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.

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LIFE

OF

JOHN CHURCHILL

Duke of Marlborough

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BY

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WITH PORTRAIT, MAPS, AND PLANS

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CHAPTER I.

Churchill's Early Years.

JOHN CHURCHILL was born at Ashe, in Devonshire, on the 24th June, 1650. His father, Winston Churchill, was a Cavalier, who throughout the stormy days of the Commonwealth remained faithful to the cause of the Stuarts. On this account his family estate of Mintern was burdened by Parliament with a fine so heavy that he could not possibly pay it, and his estate was sequestrated. At the Restoration there seemed a hope of more prosperous days for Winston Churchill. His estate of Mintern was given back to him, and he was soon after knighted; he was returned to Parliament, and received some trifling appointments about Court. He amused himself with the pursuit of literature, and published a work called *Divi Britannici*, a ridiculous panegyric on royalty. But though regarded with favour by Charles II. on account of his persistent loyalty, Sir Winston Churchill remained in needy circumstances, and had not much money to spend on the education of his children. Before the

Restoration, John, his eldest surviving son, had been taught by his father and a neighbouring clergyman. Afterwards, when his father came to London, he was for a short time a scholar at St. Paul's school, where, however, he did not stay long enough to get any literary training, and remained all his life entirely wanting in book-learning.

Sir Winston Churchill thought it well to make speedy use of the favour he enjoyed at Court, and soon after the Restoration took John away from school to place him as page-of-honour with the Duke of York, the King's brother; and John's sister, Arabella, was made maid-of-honour to the first Duchess of York, Ann Hyde. In this way the fortunes of Sir Winston's children were secured. John's interest in military matters was soon noticed by the Duke of York. One day, struck by the eagerness with which he saw his page watch him direct the exercise of two regiments of foot guards, the Duke asked him what profession he would choose for himself; the boy threw himself on his knees before his master, and begged that he might be given a pair of colours in one of those fine regiments. His wish was soon fulfilled; and at the age of sixteen, in the year 1666, he got his commission, and went out to Tangiers with his regiment. Tangiers, then a dependency of the English Crown, was being besieged by the Moors, and in the chance skirmishes of the siege Churchill eagerly seized every opportunity of showing his

valour and zeal for his profession. He was recalled the same year by the Duke of York, and continued for some time in attendance upon his master at Court.

Churchill was well fitted to shine amongst the gay and profligate crowd of courtiers who surrounded the pleasure-loving Charles II. He was tall and well made, with fine features, fascinating manners, and an indolent grace which had great charm. He soon showed his ability to rule men; he combined such perfect dignity of manner with so entire a command of temper that even when he was young and insignificant none dared take a liberty with him. The proud beauties of the Court looked with much favour upon the handsome young soldier, and the Duchess of Cleveland, one of Charles II.'s mistresses, regarded him with special interest. Once he was nearly surprised alone with her by the King; but Churchill's presence of mind did not fail him, and he leapt from the window to avoid discovery. The Duchess rewarded him for this bold feat by a present of five thousand pounds. Though he might be gay and giddy, Churchill already showed that care for money which became such a ruling passion with him in after life, and prudently invested his five thousand pounds in buying an annuity.

Churchill's advancement was also greatly aided by the favour with which the Duke of York regarded his sister Arabella. James's love for her made him willing to do all in his power for her

brother. In 1672 Churchill was sent to Holland with his regiment, which formed part of a detachment of six thousand men who were led by the Duke of Monmouth, Charles II.'s natural son, to aid Lewis XIV., King of France, against the Dutch.

For some time Europe had watched with alarm the growing power of Lewis XIV. His ambition seemed boundless; and it was hard to see what power existed in Europe sufficiently strong to oppose his schemes. The decaying monarchy of Spain, weak and unmanageable through its vast possessions when not held together by a firm hand, had ceased to be of any account in the affairs of Europe. It was well known that the end of Lewis XIV.'s ambition was to add the Dutch Provinces to his dominions, and on the death of the sickly and childless King of Spain to seat his own grandson on the Spanish throne, and so add that vast kingdom to the dominions of the House of Bourbon. It was clear that nothing could resist him but a firm union of the remaining powers of Europe. Sir William Temple, English resident at the Hague, and one of the ablest diplomatists of those days, early tried to impress this upon Charles II., and succeeded in persuading him to conclude, in 1668, an offensive and defensive alliance with Holland and Sweden, called the Triple Alliance. But Charles II. cared little for foreign politics; the balance of power in Europe was nothing to him compared

with ease at home, and freedom to do as he liked. Lewis XIV. spared no pains to win from the ranks of his enemies a monarch whose neutrality, could he get nothing more, would be of great importance to him in the future. He promised to grant Charles II. a large subsidy, which would free him from the control of his Parliament by taking away the need for its grants, if Charles II. would aid him in his projects against Holland and Spain. In 1670 the Triple Alliance was replaced by the secret Treaty of Dover between Charles II. and Lewis XIV. Under Cromwell, England had once more become a power of the first rank in Europe, and the policy of the Triple Alliance would have enabled her to remain so. But Charles II. chose to become a cipher in European politics, and take up the ignominious position of Lewis XIV.'s pensioner rather than submit to what he considered the vexatious and unwarrantable interference of Parliament in the conduct of affairs.

The result of the Treaty of Dover was, that in 1672 England joined France in making war upon Holland. Charles II., that he might have his hands free, first of all dissolved Parliament in 1671, because in Parliament there was a strong party which would never allow an attack upon Holland, which they looked upon as the bulwark of Protestantism. Even before war had been declared, Charles II. treacherously gave his admirals orders to attack a richly-laden fleet of Dutch merchantmen on their way back from Smyrna. But the Dutch had

learnt to be suspicious, even in time of peace, and were secretly prepared for an attack. The English were beaten back with heavy loss, and only succeeded in capturing two vessels. After this war was declared. The conduct of the war at sea was to be left to the English fleet, to which Lewis XIV. contributed a squadron, whilst Charles II. sent some troops under Monmouth to assist the French army. It was with these troops that Churchill went to gain his first experience of a real campaign. Soon after reaching the Continent he was made a captain of grenadiers in Monmouth's own regiment, and found abundant opportunity for gaining experience and distinction.

Lewis XIV. nominally commanded the French army himself; but the direction of its movements was really left to the two greatest generals of the day, the Prince of Condé, and Marshal Turenne. Condé, a brilliant military genius, knew how to seize an opportunity which to others seemed hopeless, and to snatch victory from an astonished enemy, whilst they rested confident in their strength. Turenne was a profound master of strategy. He was cold and phlegmatic, with the face and appearance of a bourgeois, and did not look like one born to command men. He does not seem ever to have been stirred by any spark of passion; nothing could rouse him to excitement, nor ever ruffle his imperturbable manner. The horrors of war awakened in him no sentiment of compassion; he gave himself body and soul to his country, and never

allowed the influence of any personal ambition. Laborious and diligent himself, he demanded the same qualities in his soldiers. He did not treat them like machines, but tried to train each man to play his part thoroughly and soberly. With indefatigable energy he superintended everything in the camp and in the field himself. He turned every man, every chance, to account, and wasted neither resources nor money.

Such was the man under whom Churchill learned the art of war. His native genius enabled him to appreciate Turenne's strategy, and to learn from it those lessons which in the end made him a greater general than his master. Turenne soon discovered the abilities of the young Englishman. When at the siege of Nimeguen a lieutenant-colonel had scandalously deserted a post which he had been bidden to defend to the last, Turenne said, "I will bet a supper and a dozen of claret that my handsome Englishman will recover the post with half the number of men that the officer commanded who lost it." He was not mistaken. Churchill drove out the enemy after a short and fierce struggle, and maintained the post. At the siege of Maestricht he so distinguished himself, by the desperate valour with which he aided the Duke of Monmouth to recover a lodgment which had been recaptured by the enemy, that he was publicly thanked for his services by Lewis XIV., at the head of the army.

The victorious course of Lewis XIV.'s army

seemed to threaten the Dutch with total destruction. On sea they were at home, and could maintain an equal conflict with their enemies; their great admiral, De Ruyter, had engaged the English fleet in a fiercely-contested battle in Southwold Bay, where neither side could claim the victory. But on land the Dutch had only a miserable force of twenty-five thousand raw soldiers to oppose to the magnificent armies of Lewis XIV. Besides this the United Provinces were divided amongst themselves. On one side was the dynastic faction, which upheld the claims of the House of Orange; on the other side the aristocratic faction, at the head of which stood the Pensionary De Witt. De Witt had long held the chief control of affairs, and the States General had decreed the exclusion of the members of the House of Orange from the Stadtholdership. The command of the troops however was given to young William of Orange, the son of Prince William II. of Orange, who had married Mary, daughter of Charles I., King of England. With his raw troops William was unable to do anything to save his country; Lewis XIV. carried everything before him. De Witt offered terms of peace, which seemed humble enough; but Lewis XIV. refused them, and offered terms so humiliating that they could mean nothing but the destruction of the prosperity and the independence of the Republic. At this the Dutch people rose in despair. They turned their anger first upon De Witt, whom they unjustly regarded

as one of the causes of their desperate condition. Even their brave admiral, De Ruyter, was insulted in the streets, and the only man in whom they would confide was young William of Orange. The States General were forced to cancel their own decree and name William Stadtholder. Soon afterwards De Witt and his brother were murdered in the streets of Amsterdam by a furious mob.

William showed himself equal to the terrible emergency. Both Charles II. and Lewis XIV. tried by the most seductive promises to win him over from the cause of the Republic, but nothing could shake him. He rejected the terms offered by Lewis XIV., and gave orders that the dykes which kept the sea and the great rivers from overflowing the lowlands of Holland should be opened. The whole country became one vast lake, out of which the towns rose like islands. The invaders had to flee before the waters, and the Republic gained a brief respite in its danger. This gave the Emperor and the German Princes time to come to the aid of the Dutch, and the theatre of war was enlarged. In 1673 Turenne commanded on the Rhine, and this campaign, though marked by no great victory, for he was badly supported, and opposed to a fine army under the Imperial general, Montecuculli, was one of his most brilliant feats of strategy.

In 1673, Charles II. had been forced to summon Parliament, for he was in need of money, and Lewis XIV.'s own needs were too pressing for him

to be able to aid his ally. Parliament vigorously attacked Charles II.'s policy during the recess, in which he had issued a Declaration of Indulgence to Roman Catholics and Dissenters from the Church of England. He was now compelled to rescind this, and Parliament passed the Test Act, which compelled all persons holding any office to sign a declaration against Transubstantiation, and publicly receive the Sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England. Parliament went on to compel the King to dismiss some of his ministers, and finally to urge him to make peace with the Dutch. To Sir William Temple was entrusted the task of concluding the peace, which was signed in February, 1674.

In spite of the peace, Charles II. allowed the six thousand troops which he sent to the French army to remain in Lewis's service. Churchill's ability won him rapid advancement in the army. On the 3rd April, 1674, Lewis XIV. appointed him colonel of the English regiment, and he was present during Turenne's campaign on the Rhine. There he saw enough of the horrors of war; for the July and August of 1674 were devoted by Turenne to the total devastation of the Palatinate. He wished to make it impossible for the enemy to subsist there, and threaten the French frontier. In these two months one of the fairest provinces of Germany was reduced to a barren waste, with here and there the charred remains of cities and villages. But this terrible sight did not have the effect of

making Churchill indifferent to the suffering produced by war. On the contrary, we shall find that when in supreme command himself, one of his first cares was always for the wounded, and that he could never see the miseries of an innocent population without an earnest desire for peace.

Lewis XIV. continued the war for some years. In 1675 the French suffered a severe loss in the death of Turenne, who was killed by a chance ball whilst surveying the enemy's position at Sasbach, in Alsace. A general peace was finally concluded at Nimeguen in 1678, from which France reaped all the advantages. In England Charles II. had excited such suspicion amongst the Protestants, that nothing would gratify them but a firm alliance with Holland. William of Orange came over to visit his uncles in 1677, and a marriage was concluded between him and Mary, the eldest daughter of James, Duke of York. This marriage roused Lewis XIV.'s wrath, and Charles had great difficulty in pacifying him, and persuading him that this new alliance meant nothing, but was only intended to keep Parliament quiet. Charles finally acted as mediator at the Peace of Nimeguen, which could only be regarded as a temporary measure; for the ambition of Lewis XIV. was still unchecked, and his schemes were as dangerous as ever to the peace of Europe.

Though Churchill was with the army again after the death of Turenne, he seems during the campaign to have occasionally returned to England, and to

have been in attendance on the Duke of York, who successively appointed him a Gentleman of his Bedchamber, and his Master of the Robes.

The licentiousness and unbridled profligacy of the Court of Charles II. is well known. Fortunately, Churchill was saved from being too deeply entangled in its dissipations by his pure and faithful love for Sarah Jennings, one of the ladies of the Duchess of York's Court.

Sarah was the daughter of a Mr. Jennings who had been distinguished for his devotion to the cause of the Stuarts. After the Restoration he had found no difficulty in getting places at Court for his two daughters. Frances, the elder, was one of the loveliest women of the day. She married first Sir James Hamilton, and afterwards, in 1667, Richard Talbot, Earl of Tyrconnel, an Irishman of infamous character, ready to do anything to gain money and power. Sarah the younger sister came to court at the age of twelve, and grew up as the companion of the Princess Anne, the Duke of York's second daughter. She lacked the regular beauty of her sister, but her fine figure, expressive features, and beautiful hair, won for her a crowd of admirers. Churchill lost his heart to her when she was only sixteen, and she soon singled him out for special favour. They were both of them singularly ambitious of power and influence. Sarah pined to be in a position where she might command. Churchill deeply felt his penniless condition, and desired wealth as well as power.

It would have seemed that both were unlikely persons to marry for love; but in this case passion was stronger than ambition, and triumphed over the objections of their parents, and all other obstacles to their union. Churchill's parents suggested to him another bride who, though plain, had a large fortune, and the report of his probable marriage brought him bitter reproaches for inconstancy from Sarah Jennings. Her petulant temper did not help to make the days of courtship pass very smoothly for Churchill. His letters to her breathe nothing but the deep devotion of a warm and sensitive heart, which was pained by her slightest reproach, and could not rest under the sense of her displeasure. She, on the contrary, delighted to show her power over him. She would make him miserable by her haughtiness, in order that the least sign of returning favour might win from him expressions of the most passionate gratitude. But at the bottom her affection was as sincere as his, and early in 1678 they were privately married in the presence of the Duchess of York. Marriage only deepened their affection, and in that dissolute age they formed an example, unhappily only too rare amongst the higher classes, of a perfect union which, though ruffled occasionally by Sarah's overbearing temper, was never marred by jealousy or mistrust.

About the time of his marriage Colonel Churchill obtained a regiment of foot. During the first years of his married life he had no settled home, and

was repeatedly separated from his wife. He was sent in 1678 on a mission to the Prince of Orange, at the time when Charles II., to gain the favour of Parliament, affected a desire to renew the Triple Alliance. From Breda he writes to his wife: "I would be glad you should hear from me by every post. . . . . I would lose no time . . . . for I do with all my heart and soul long to be with you, you being dearer to me than my own life." Towards the end of the year the alliance of Charles II. with the Prince of Orange compelled him to send some troops to the Dutch army to help against the French, and Churchill accompanied them to take the command of a brigade. But he had hardly reached the Continent when the Treaty of Nimeguen was concluded, and he was able to come back to his wife.

James, Duke of York, had for some time publicly declared himself a Roman Catholic. In the present temper of the nation, which was alarmed at the Catholic tendencies of the King, this made him very unpopular. The House of Commons, which met in 1679, even hinted that the only way to secure the safety of the religion and liberties of the country was to exclude the Duke of York from the throne. Charles II. had to bid his brother retire to the Hague in March, 1679, that the people might not be irritated by his presence at Court. Colonel Churchill and his wife both went with the Duke and Duchess of York. Towards the end of the year the Duke seized the pretext of a

slight illness of Charles II. to pay a visit to London with Churchill. Whilst the Duke of York stayed in London Churchill was sent on a mission to Paris; for Charles II., in spite of his apparent approaches to the Prince of Orange, was really as closely in league with France as ever, and, in the present temper of the nation, stood in pressing need of Lewis XIV.'s help. The Duke could not get the permission of the King to return to London, but was allowed to remove from the Hague to Scotland, where the chief administration was put into his hands. Hither Churchill accompanied him in 1679, and was joined in 1680 by his wife, who came to Scotland in attendance on the Duchess of York.

Meanwhile affairs in England grew more and more stormy. The first Parliament of 1679 had been dissolved and a new one summoned, in which Charles hoped to find a more submissive spirit. But he was disappointed; the cry for the exclusion of the Duke of York from the throne grew louder than ever. The people hoped that their favourite, the Duke of Monmouth, Charles II.'s natural son, might succeed his father; and an attempt was made to prove that Charles had been secretly married to Monmouth's mother. The Exclusion Bill was brought into the House of Commons in October, 1680, and was passed by a great majority. It was finally thrown out by the House of Lords, chiefly owing to the brilliant eloquence of Viscount Halifax, the most accomplished statesman of the day.

It was thought wise that the Duke of York

should still for a while stay away from Court, and Colonel Churchill remained with him in Scotland. Churchill stood high in the Duke's confidence, and was several times sent by him on secret missions to Charles II., whom the Duke exhorted not to become "a slave to his Parliament," but to free himself by a still closer alliance with France. The Duke also anxiously begged to be allowed to return to Court.

Part of the time that Churchill was in Scotland his wife had to stay in London, where, on the 19th July, 1681, she gave birth to their first child, a daughter, Henrietta. The father shows in his letters a tender interest in his child, and writes: "I hope all the red spots of our child will be gone against I see her, and her nose straight, so that I may fancy it to be like the mother; for as she has your coloured hair, I would have her be like you in all things else." His affection for his children seems to have been very tender, even from their earliest years. Later on, after the birth of Ann, his second daughter, he writes to his wife: "You cannot imagine how I am pleased with the children; for, having nobody but their maid, they are so fond of me that when I am at home they will be always with me, kissing and hugging me. Their heats are quite gone, so that against you come home they will be in beauty. Miss is pulling me by the arm that she may write to her dear mamma, so that I shall say no more, only beg that you will love me always as well as I love you, and then we cannot

but be happy." He adds a postscript for his little girl:

"I kiss your hands, my dear mamma.—HARRIET."

At last, in 1682, the Duke of York was allowed to return to Court. Since the time that the Commons passed the Exclusion Bill with a large majority a reaction had set in, and the King and his Government had been able to triumph over their opponents. It was during the struggle about the Exclusion Bill that the names afterwards so familiar in the history of English politics—Whig and Tory—first came into use. Tory was the name given to a number of wild Irish rebels, who as outlaws had taken refuge in the bogs in the North of Ireland. The Duke of York was supposed secretly to protect these rebels, and so the party who supported the Exclusion Bill gave its opponents the nickname of Tory. In giving them this name they seemed to credit those who had put themselves forward as champions of the prerogative and hereditary right, with secret leanings towards Catholicism. The Tories revenged themselves by calling their opponents Whigs, from the Whigamores, by which name a body of fanatical Scottish Covenanters were commonly known in the Lowlands of Scotland.

The rage of party faction was very violent in England, and Lewis XIV. did all he could to foment it. He did not wish the King and his Parliament to be on good terms; for then Charles II. would be able to take up an independent position,

and free himself from his disgraceful position of dependence. Lewis XIV. therefore at the same time exhorted Charles II. not to give way to Parliament, and, by means of his ambassador, secretly bade the Whigs stand firmly to their opposition, promising that he would protect them. Meanwhile the violence of the Whigs had terrified the more moderate people, and they were eager to show their devotion to the King. Charles II. found himself in a position to do without Parliament for a while; for he stood in no pressing need of money, and besides could count upon help from Lewis XIV. As the law then stood he need not summon Parliament for three years, and that would give him time to take severe measures to repress the Whigs. Many of them were brought to trial on fabricated charges of sedition, and were found guilty by the jury. The mass of the people seemed willing to go any length in supporting the power of the King, and the divine right of kings and the sin of rebellion were the favourite topics in the pulpit.

The Duke of York returned in triumph to London in 1682, once more took his seat at the Council, and resumed the direction of naval affairs. His presence was calculated to increase the violence of the King's measures against the Whigs. In his administration of Scotland, the Duke of York had been distinguished for his severity; he had not only ordered the infliction of torture upon State prisoners, but had stood by to watch the sufferings

of his unhappy victims. He was not likely, therefore, to urge moderate measures in England. The Test Act should have excluded him from taking any part in public affairs; but Charles could count enough upon the subserviency of the people to venture to infringe it.

The discovery of a Whig plot, known as the Rye-house Plot, gave the Government a new excuse for violent measures. The Rye-house Plot had been formed by a few desperate men, whose object was to seize the persons of Charles II. and the Duke of York; but Charles II. resolved that the whole Whig party should share the blame. Virtuous and upright men, of whose guilt there was no legal proof, suffered death on the scaffold for it. From one illegal act Charles II. proceeded to another. Three years had passed since his last Parliament, and he issued no writs for a new one. Even amongst the Tories murmurs began to be heard. Halifax, to whom the rejection of the Exclusion Bill was mainly due, remonstrated against the measures of the Government, of which he was a member, and won the bitter animosity of the Duke of York by advocating greater respect for the constitution.

The Duke of York, in these days of prosperity, did not forget the faithful services of Colonel Churchill. He was created a peer of Scotland, with the title of Baron Churchill of Aymouth, and in November, 1683, was appointed colonel of the royal regiment of dragoons, which was just being

raised, as the first regiment of the kind in England. The public had seen no cause to rate highly Churchill's merits, and ridiculed his appointment as a piece of favouritism. One lampoon of the time says—

> "Let 's cut our meat with spoons.
> The sense is as good
> As that Churchill should
> Be put to command the dragoons."

In 1683 the Lady Anne, James Duke of York's younger daughter, was married to Prince George of Denmark, and Lady Churchill was appointed her Lady of the Bedchamber. When Sarah Jennings, at the age of twelve, was received into the Duchess of York's household, she had soon become the object of the tender affection of the Lady Anne, who was three years younger. As time went on their friendship ripened into greater intimacy. Anne was one of those who was made to be ruled by a more powerful mind. She was of an affectionate disposition, but of a slow and stubborn nature. She clung with desperate energy to any opinion which she had once imbibed, and showed the same tenacity in clinging to any person whom she had learnt to love. She was charmed by Sarah's lively disposition, and submitted meekly to her imperious ways. Anne was delighted to have her friend as Lady of her Bedchamber, and daily learnt more and more to depend upon her. She was an affectionate wife; but Prince George was not a man to exercise influence over any one. He was dull and stupid,

cared only for eating and drinking, and was as willing as his wife to be ruled by others. Lady Churchill used no arts to gain her influence. She was not one who could stoop to flatter even a princess, and she scolded and domineered over Anne with perfect freedom. Anne seemed only to wish to encourage her freedom. She writes to her:

"Let me beg of you not to call me your highness at every word, but to be as free with me as one friend ought to be with another; and you can never give me any greater proof of your friendship than in telling me your mind freely in all things, which I do beg you to do, and if ever it were in my power to serve you, nobody would be more ready than myself."

At last Anne suggested that for the sake of greater freedom they should adopt new names, which should put them apparently on an equal footing. She called herself Mrs. Morley, and Lady Churchill adopted the name of Mrs. Freeman. In their private correspondence Prince George became Mr. Morley, and Lord Churchill Mr. Freeman.

CHAPTER II.

James II.

ON the 2nd of February, 1685, in the midst of the dissipations of his Court, Charles II. was suddenly taken ill, and died on the morning of the 6th of February. James was proclaimed King without any disturbance. According to custom he at once addressed a short speech to the Lords of the Council, in which he strove to allay the anxiety which was caused by his religion. He told them that he knew he was accused of a love for arbitrary power, but that they would find him as lenient as his brother had been. He expressed himself willing to maintain the existing order in Church and State, and said that it would be his care to support and defend the Church of England. His speech produced a favourable impression, and when published did much to diminish the anxiety which had disturbed men's minds. The majority of people dreaded any disturbance, and were willing loyally to accept James II. if he would be true to his promises. He was fifty-two years of age, and was not likely to reign long. In 1673 he had married for the second time a young

and pretty wife, Mary of Modena, but his second marriage had brought him no living child. Both the daughters of his first marriage, Mary, Princess of Orange, and Anne, Princess of Denmark, were zealous Protestants, and there was every reason to hope that on his death the throne would again be filled by a Protestant; till then men were willing to wait patiently.

In general, James II. seemed at first inclined to follow in the steps of Charles II. He made some changes in the Ministry, but retained most of those ministers who had stood high in Charles II.'s favour. He was as anxious as Charles II. had been to keep on good terms with France. But it was clear that it would not do to put off any longer summoning a Parliament, and in the present favourable temper of the nation it was best to do so as soon as possible. James II. begged Barillon, the French ambassador, to assure his master that only the extreme urgency of the moment could have prevailed upon him to take such a step without first consulting Lewis XIV. But he promised not to allow Parliament to interfere in foreign politics, and to dismiss it if it were unwilling to submit to him. James II.'s brother-in-law and Prime Minister, the Earl of Rochester, was bidden to ask Barillon for more money. Lewis XIV. had foreseen this demand, and at the first news of Charles II.'s death had sent £7500 to Barillon for the use of James II. When Barillon carried the good news to Whitehall, James II. shed tears

of joy at the thought of Lewis XIV.'s considerate kindness. He determined to send an extraordinary embassy to express his devotion and gratitude, and named Lord Churchill as his ambassador. Churchill, like others, was willing to believe James II.'s assurance of good government, but was not without some anxiety for the future. He said to Lord Galway, in Paris, "If the King should attempt to change our religion and constitution, I will instantly quit his service."

Churchill returned from Paris in time to be present at the King's coronation, and soon afterwards was raised to the English peerage, under the title of Baron Churchill of Sandridge, in Hertfordshire.

Whilst in England the accession of James II. had been peaceably accepted, there was a band of Whig refugees in Holland who were by no means prepared to witness tamely the destruction of all their hopes. Chief in rank amongst these refugees were the Duke of Monmouth and the Scottish Duke of Argyle. These two men were pushed on by the more violent among their companions, to make a descent on England in the hope of raising a rebellion which would put Monmouth on the throne. The Duke of Argyle was to land in Scotland, where it was hoped that his popularity would induce many to join him; whilst Monmouth was to effect a rising in the West of England, where he was well known, and much beloved by the people.

The Duke of Argyle started first on the 2nd of May, and his attempt proved a disastrous failure. The Scots showed themselves too timid to gather round him, he himself had only the nominal command of the expedition, and was hampered at every step by the interference and ignorant folly of his companions. His small force faded away without a battle, and he was made prisoner whilst attempting to escape. He was taken to Edinburgh, and suffered death on the scaffold, with great dignity, on June 30th.

Meanwhile Monmouth had landed at Lyme, on the 11th June, and thousands flocked eagerly to his standard. The Duke of Albemarle marched against him with the trainbands, and thought that he would easily be able to crush the insurrection at one blow. But alarmed at the resolute appearance of the rebels, and still more at the temper of his own troops, which made him afraid that they would go over to the enemy in a body, he thought it best to retreat. In London vigorous measures were being taken to meet the danger. Parliament and the great mass of the people showed unwavering loyalty, and even the Whigs had no desire to favour Monmouth's cause. The forces of the Government were rapidly got together. Churchill was appointed to command a small body of troops assembled at Salisbury, and his vigilance enabled him to scatter many of the detached bands of rebels. Monmouth, who had caused himself to be proclaimed king at Taun-

ton, on June 20th, sent a trumpeter to Churchill claiming his allegiance, and bidding him suspend all hostilities. Churchill took no notice of his letter except to forward it to James II.: with his handful of men he harassed Monmouth on his march, and threw constant difficulties in his way.

Monmouth had counted on a general rising of the Whigs in his favour. He knew that with a crowd of undisciplined peasants he would be able to effect nothing against regular troops. He could form no settled plan of action, but wandered helplessly from place to place. Meanwhile Lord Feversham was advancing at the head of the Royalist army, and had been joined by Churchill. They encamped at Weston Zoyland, a village in Somersetshire, which rose out of the midst of a marsh called Sedgemoor. Monmouth determined to risk a night attack on the Royalist camp; for Feversham was an utterly incompetent commander, and the discipline of his camp was lax. Monmouth thought that if he could effect a surprise his chances might be not altogether hopeless. On the night of Sunday, July 6th, the attack was made in the midst of a thick mist. The chance report of a pistol alarmed the Royalist troops. The rebels lost themselves in the mist, and amongst the deep ditches which intersected the moor; and all chance of taking the troops by surprise was gone. Though Feversham was still in bed, the troops, under Churchill's orders, fell upon the rebels on all sides. Monmouth saw that the day

was lost. Anxious to save his own life at any cost he fled from the field, whilst those who were risking everything for his sake fought bravely on. By four o'clock in the morning the rebels were completely routed, and fled in all directions.

Feversham, who had borne no part in the battle, now suffered his soldiers to spread devastation on all sides, and his military executions filled the country with horror. Monmouth had been captured in his attempt to flee into Hampshire. He was taken to London, and, though he abased himself to plead for life to James II. in the most abject terms, was executed on July 15th.

James II. showed the cruelty and hardness of his disposition by the terrible steps which he took to punish this insurrection. Not satisfied by the horrors of the military executions which had followed the battle of Sedgemoor, he sent into the western counties Chief Justice Jeffreys, a judge who had earned his favour by his unscrupulous violence and cruelty, to punish all who had had any share in the insurrection. This circuit is commonly known as the Bloody Assize; three hundred and twenty rebels were hanged, eight hundred sold into slavery beyond the sea; even the Queen and her ladies were not ashamed to profit by the sale of these unhappy victims. Well might Churchill exclaim, as he struck upon the chimneypiece on which he leant, "This marble is not harder than the King's heart!" Churchill himself had no share in this cruelty. His energy

had really won the battle of Sedgemoor; but he only occupied a subordinate place in the army, and Feversham had never troubled to consult with him or confide his plans to him. Churchill bore this neglect with his characteristic self-command, and showed himself so respectful to his incompetent superior, and so zealous in discharging his duties, that Feversham praised his behaviour, and promised to report on it to the King. Churchill was appointed colonel of the third troop of horse guards for his services at the battle of Sedgemoor. After this he took no part in public affairs during the remainder of the reign of James II. There was no opportunity for military service, and James must have considered Lord Churchill too firm in his attachment to the Protestant faith to deserve promotion to any office of State.

Little by little James II. showed men what he had meant by his promise to defend the constitution and the Church of England. He wished to make himself strong by means of a standing army, and in a few months increased the number of soldiers in England from six thousand to nearly twenty thousand. In violation of the Test Act, Catholics were allowed to hold commissions in the English army. The Commons, who at their first meeting after James II.'s accession had seemed willing to do anything for him, now began to show a different spirit. They refused to grant the supplies which the King needed for the support of his army, and criticised in severe terms the King's speech from

the throne, till he in anger prorogued them. James II. now felt himself at liberty to act as he chose. He asserted that by virtue of his dispensing power he might admit Roman Catholics to all offices. He presented them even to ecclesiastical benefices, and set up again the old Court of High Commission, by which he hoped to force resisting Churchmen to submission. Those of his ministers who objected to his measures, and showed themselves unwilling to attack the rights of the Church of England, were one by one dismissed from their offices, and their places filled by Catholics. At last, on April 4th, 1687, he published a Declaration of a general Indulgence, which annulled all penal laws and all religious tests. In this way he hoped to gain over the Protestant Dissenters; but the great mass of them loved their country too well to care for an Indulgence which was granted only by the arbitrary use of the royal power.

In the midst of the deep anxiety occasioned by these measures, the Whigs began to look eagerly across the water to the only man who could give them any help. William of Orange had long watched with interest the struggle of the different factions in England. He cannot be said to have sided with either party; he was neither Whig nor Tory. His whole being was absorbed in one thought—opposition to France. He alone amongst European statesmen saw clearly the danger with which Europe was threatened by the power of Lewis XIV. He knew that the

struggle would soon come when it would have to be decided whether or no Lewis XIV. was to bring the vast dominions of the Spanish monarchy under the rule of the House of Bourbon, and to order European politics at his pleasure. In this struggle it would be of immense importance what side England might take, and it was necessary, if England were to play an important part in European politics, that her King and Parliament should be at peace. Both Lewis XIV. and William of Orange realized this; and whilst Lewis XIV.'s policy therefore was to fan the discord between King and Parliament, William did all in his power to bring them to an agreement. He had no sympathy with the pretensions of the Whigs. He himself hoped one day to wear with his wife the crown of England, and he would like it to descend to him without one prerogative impaired; but he was willing to sacrifice anything to his great aim, and had always exhorted the King of England to give way to his Parliament rather than attempt to govern without it. He had seen with disgust the support given by many of the Whigs to the claims of Monmouth. To declare Monmouth legitimate would of course destroy the right to the crown of England of the Lady Mary, William's wife. William therefore had supported the rights of James II., and it was mainly in obedience to his exhortations that Halifax had exerted himself to obtain the rejection of the Exclusion Bill.

William watched the struggle of English parties

free from the motives by which they were guided. He had no care for England except in so far as her co-operation was necessary to his purposes. He was one of the greatest statesmen whom Europe has ever seen, and he looked at things from a point of view far above the small party struggles of the day. When almost a boy he had been called to the head of affairs in Holland, at a moment when the country seemed to lie helpless at the feet of Lewis XIV. But his was that kind of courage which shines most brightly in moments when everything seems lost. He had found means to rescue his country from the extremity of her peril, but he knew that the respite was only for a short time; meanwhile he must prepare for another struggle. He was a man of indomitable energy and perseverance. Outwardly of a cold and stubborn nature, he inspired no sympathy in the minds of men. Only the few who were admitted to his intimacy knew the fire which burnt within him, the almost religious zeal which animated him in his great projects. His constitution was weak and diseased, he was a constant prey to asthma; but the energy of his powerful mind triumphed over his weak body. His face was furrowed with the deep lines of suffering and care; but his brilliant eye, his broad and lofty forehead, showed the fire of the mind within.

To his wife, the Lady Mary, William was bound by the deepest affection. The most perfect confidence reigned between them, and she had made

it clear to him that she would not wear the English crown unless he shared it with her. Both William and Mary strongly disapproved of the Declaration of Indulgence. William himself held decided Calvinistic views, and was in favour of toleration to the English Dissenters. But he saw that in publishing the Declaration of Indulgence, James had usurped a prerogative to which he had no right, and he viewed with alarm and indignation the favour shown to Roman Catholics.

Dykvelt, one of the ablest of Dutch diplomatists, was sent to England early in 1687, on a nominal embassy to James II., but with instructions to enter into communications with the leading nobles, both Whigs and Tory. He found everywhere sentiments of profound distrust towards James II., and a growing desire that William would interfere to put an end to the tyranny of the King. Dykvelt returned to the Hague, bearing letters to William from many of the leading Englishmen. Amongst others he took one from Churchill, who was animated by none of that feeling of gratitude or personal devotion that would have led most men to remain, under all circumstances, faithful to a King to whom they owed everything. James II. had been Churchill's friend and patron from his earliest youth; but Churchill's ruling passion was ambition, both for wealth and power. Under James II. nothing could be hoped for unless he changed his religion, and that was the one point on which he was not willing to give way. He was anxious to make friends in

time with the man who he foresaw would before long be the ruler of England. It was of great importance to William to know what side would be taken by Churchill; for the Lady Anne, the next heir to the crown after the Lady Mary, was entirely under the influence of the Churchills, and would be sure to feel as they felt. Churchill's letter explained her opinions as well as his own.

"The Princess of Denmark having ordered me to discourse with Monsieur Dykvelt, and to let him know her resolutions, so that he might let your Highness and the Princess her sister know that she was resolved, by the assistance of God, to suffer all extremities, even to death itself, rather than be brought to change her religion, I thought it my duty . . . . to give you assurances under my own hand, that my places and the King's favour I set at nought, in comparison of being true to my religion. In all things but this the King may command me; and I call God to witness, that even with joy I should expose my life for his service, so sensible am I of his favours. . . . . I think it may be a great ease to your Highness and the Princess, to be satisfied that the Princess of Denmark is safe in the trusting of me; I being resolved, although I cannot live the life of a saint, if there be occasion for it to show the resolution of a martyr."

The information and letters brought by Dykvelt showed William very clearly that sooner or later it would be advisable to interfere decidedly in

English affairs. But though one or two rash spirits urged him to do so at once, he determined to wait till he could be sure of complete success. He had no wish to provoke a civil war in England, for that would leave Lewis XIV. at liberty to do as he liked on the Continent.

CHAPTER III.

The Revolution.

IN August, 1687, James II. went on a royal Progress, to reconcile the people to the late changes, and to judge of their temper. During this Progress Lord Churchill waited upon him, and seized an opportunity, when alone with the King in the Dean's garden at Winchester, to represent to him the alarm with which his measures had inspired the great mass of the people, reminding him that he himself and at least nine-tenths of the English people were determined to live and die in the Protestant faith. James II. angrily interrupted him. "I tell you, Churchill," he exclaimed, "I will exercise my own religion in such a manner as I think fitting. I will show favour to my Catholic subjects, and be a common father to all my Protestant subjects of what religion soever; but I am to remember that I am King, and to be obeyed by them. As for the consequences, I shall leave them to Providence, and make use of the power God has put into my hands to prevent anything that shall be injurious to my honour, or derogatory to the duty that is owing to me."

Nothing could teach James II. wisdom. In his narrow-minded bigotry he clung pertinaciously to his own ideas, and would only listen to those who agreed with him. Even the moderate Roman Catholics disapproved of his violent measures, and would have infinitely preferred a toleration obtained by legal means. The Pope himself disapproved of his policy, and received his ambassador coldly. But James II. committed one arbitrary act after another throughout the winter, till it seemed as if every post in the kingdom was to be filled by a Papist.

In April, 1688, he published a second Declaration of Indulgence, to show that his mind was unchanged since last April, and ordered it to be read in all churches at the time of divine service for two successive Sundays. The clergy, who a few years before had proclaimed from the pulpit with zeal the doctrines of the divine right of kings and of passive obedience, refused almost to a man to obey the royal command. Archbishop Sancroft, and six bishops who were then in London, held a meeting, in which they drew up a moderate petition to James II. against the Indulgence. Furious at this conduct, James II. determined to punish the bishops. He found that the only way in which he could proceed against them was by prosecuting them for a seditious libel.

Proceedings were opened, and the bishops, who refused to accept bail, were taken to the Tower, followed by crowds, who hailed them as martyrs,

and kneeling around them implored their blessing. At the trial, in spite of all the endeavours of the Government, a verdict of not guilty was returned, which was received with tumultuous rejoicings by the people. Even in the camp at Hounslow the soldiers on whom James II. thought he could rely, raised a shout of joy when they heard that the bishops were acquitted.

Whilst the bishops were in the Tower, on the 10th of June, 1688, the Queen gave birth to a son. She had had four children before, but none had outlived infancy, and it was five years since the last had been born. In their excited temper men suspected that the child was not really the Queen's, and that an heir to the throne was being palmed off upon them. Before the child was born, Papists had confidently predicted that it would be a son; the great mass of the nation now looked upon the whole affair as a Papist hoax. At any rate, whether the true child of James II. or not, it was certain that the little Prince would be brought up as a Catholic. Men could no longer look forward to the end of the tyranny under which they groaned; there could be no hope of the peaceable accession of Mary and William.

On the day of the acquittal of the bishops, a letter was despatched to William of Orange at the Hague, containing an invitation to him to land in England with some troops; he was assured that thousands would at once flock to his standard. This letter was signed by seven of the leading

personages who had for some time been in communication with William, all men of high rank and position—the Earls of Shrewsbury, Devonshire, and Danby; Lord Lumley, Edward Russell, Henry Sidney, and Compton, Bishop of London.

William saw that his time was come. Many difficulties still surrounded him; but he began with diligence to prepare for an expedition to England. New offers of aid and support arrived daily. Even Sunderland, James II.'s chief minister, and the supporter of all his schemes, who had been willing in order to please James II. secretly to profess himself a Catholic, opened communications with William. He saw that there was no hope that James II. would be able to maintain himself, and thought it wisest to provide for the future by offering to communicate to William the most secret plans of James II. and his Government. Churchill assured William that he would do his utmost to bring the army over to him, and wrote: "If you think there is anything else that I ought to do, you have but to command me."

Nothing could rouse James II. from his obstinate folly. To the last he would not believe in the danger which was clear to every one else. The only step he took made matters worse; thinking to increase the forces at his command, he brought over some Irish troops, which irritated to the last degree both the English soldiers and the people, who looked upon the Irish as Papist barbarians.

On October 10th William published his Declara-

tion, in which, after drawing attention to James II.'s illegal acts, he stated that, at the invitation of many lords spiritual and temporal, he was about to invade England for the purpose of securing a free and legal Parliament, by the decision of which he would abide. On the 5th of November he landed at Torbay, in Devonshire, and soon after entered Exeter. His landing in the West of England had not been looked for, and the preparations of his friends there were not ready, so that William was at first mortified by finding that no persons of importance joined him, though the people everywhere hailed him as their deliverer.

Meanwhile James II. had at last been roused to a sense of his danger, and was trying by every possible means to win back the favour of his people. He promised at once to summon a Parliament; he abolished the Court of High Commission, and conferred with those bishops who were in London as to the means he had best take. But the people were not in a mood to value highly concessions which they saw had only been wrung from him by fear. Day by day James II. heard of new persons of importance who had gone to join William. The army had been sent on to Salisbury, and James II. set out to join it himself; he heard that in the North the nobility and gentry were rising in William's favour, and he was anxious to engage William in battle before his position was more secured. But at Salisbury he soon saw signs that his army could not be trusted. One night Lord

Churchill and the Duke of Grafton, a natural son of Charles II., stole away to join the Prince of Orange. Churchill left a letter behind him, in which he tried to explain away his treachery, by saying that only the inviolable dictates of his conscience and a necessary concern for his religion could have led him to take such a step, adding, "I will always with the hazard of my life and fortune endeavour to preserve your royal person and lawful rights." James II. was still further alarmed by hearing that others of his officers refused to obey his commands. He felt that his own person was not safe, and in alarm broke up his camp and ordered the army to retreat on London.

Everything was in confusion. As the army retreated, one by one the nobles who had accompanied James deserted. He reached London only to hear that his daughter, the Princess Anne, had fled to join the rebels in the North, accompanied by Lady Churchill and Compton, Bishop of London, and it soon became clear that only two courses were open to him. Either he must submit to the will of the nation, and enter into negotiations with the Prince of Orange, or else he must fly. James II. was determined to do anything rather than submit. He professed to be willing to enter into negotiations with William, so as to gain time for his wife and child to escape to France. When he had heard of their arrival there he fled himself to join them, having first destroyed

all the writs which had been prepared for summoning a new Parliament. He hoped to make matters more difficult for his enemies by leaving everything in confusion behind him; and as he crossed the Thames he flung the great seal into the water. He had also left orders that Feversham was immediately to disband the army. When his flight was discovered, the greatest terror reigned in the city. There was no government, no one owned the authority necessary to keep order. It might be several days before William could reach London; till then it seemed as if the mob would have full licence to rob and plunder at their will. At this alarming moment prompt measures were taken by such peers and prelates as were then in London. Together with the City Council they formed themselves into a provisional government, to maintain order till the Prince should arrive. James II.'s flight made it easy even for the most staunch supporters of the prerogative conscientiously to take up the part of the Prince of Orange; for it was impossible to pay obedience to a King who had voluntarily abdicated his kingdom.

Matters were complicated by the capture of James II. at Sheerness, whilst he was trying to escape. The Lords ordered him to be set at liberty, and he once more came back to London. William, who was then at Windsor, saw that it would be impossible to keep order if both he and James II. were in London at the same time. After much

deliberation he sent some of his troops before him to occupy the city, and sent orders to James II. to leave Westminster at once. James II. asked to be allowed to go to Rochester, and permission was gladly given. William and all his friends wished nothing more than that James II. would again try to escape. James II. knew that they wished it, and saw well that it was the worst thing he could do. But fear had completely unnerved him, and he only longed to feel himself far away from his enemies. He was so negligently guarded that escape was easy; and before many days were over he was safe in France, where Lewis XIV. received him with tender cordiality, and gave him the palace of St. Germains as his residence.

William's first steps were full of difficulties. The machinery of government was destroyed, and he could not consistently with his Declaration assume the power of King and act as conqueror. He first summoned a meeting of the peers, and a meeting of all those members who had sat in the Parliaments of Charles II., and then, in conformity with their desires, provisionally assumed the government, and issued writs to summon a convention of the Free Estates of the Realm. His wise measures soon brought back a feeling of order and security, and the elections were quietly and speedily carried on. When the Convention met, for a time a great difference of opinion showed itself between the different parties as to the steps which were to be taken. Some wished for a

Regency, others that Mary should be Queen alone, others again that William should be King, and his wife only Queen Consort. For a time William kept himself aloof from the discussion, and did not allow his own opinion to be known. But at last he made it clear that he would consent neither to be Regent nor to be the subject of his wife. Mary, too, on learning the way in which her rights were advocated by some, wrote a letter in which she stated that she would never be Queen alone. At this crisis her perfect devotion to her husband helped to make clear the only course which could safely be taken. It was decided to offer the Crown jointly to Mary and William. By the influence of the Churchills, Anne was brought to waive her rights, so far as to consent that should William survive his wife he should be King for his lifetime, but should have no power of passing on the Crown to children born to him by any wife but Mary.

On the 12th February Mary landed in England, and on the 13th, William and Mary were proclaimed King and Queen amidst general rejoicing. Before accepting the crown, they had given their adhesion to a document called the Declaration of Right, which bound them to govern in accordance with the principles of the English Constitution. This Declaration stated that the dispensing power claimed by James II. had no legal existence; that no sovereign could raise money or maintain a standing army without the consent of Parliament, and that the nation had a right to free representa-

tion in Parliament. So this great revolution was peaceably accomplished. The rights of the people were once more clearly affirmed, and the attempt of the Stuarts to set up a personal monarchy ended in complete failure. Henceforth it became impossible for any monarch in England to govern without the support of Parliament, or to rule except in accordance with the will of his people.

CHAPTER IV.

William and Mary.

IN the disputes as to the way in which the government was to be settled Lord Churchill voted for a Regency, probably from some lingering attachment to the cause of James II.; but this did not prevent his being rewarded by William with decided tokens of favour for the services which he had rendered. On the 14th of February he was sworn a member of the Privy Council, and was made a Lord of the Bedchamber, and on the 9th of April he was created Earl of Marlborough. He probably chose this title because his mother had been connected with the Leys, Earls of Marlborough, a family which had become extinct in 1679. As he had no family estate, he built himself a house called Holywell House, near St. Albans, on a property which had belonged to his wife's family. She had a liking for the place, which on the death of her brother had passed to her and her sisters, and to please her Marlborough bought up the shares of her sisters and built a splendid mansion there, which was long their favourite residence.

Though William had thought it proper to reward

Marlborough for his services, he put little confidence in him, and gave him no share in the government. But he soon found occasion to make use of his military talents. The Peace of Nimeguen had left Europe still alarmed at the power of Lewis XIV., and at the constant encroachments which he made on the dominions of neighbouring Princes. In 1686 the German Princes had bound themselves closely together by the Treaty of Augsburg for the purpose of mutual defence. The Emperor's successes had freed him from any further danger on the side of Turkey, and he was now in a position to resist Lewis XIV. The Treaty of Augsburg was joined by the King of Sweden, and by the King of Spain, who wished to secure the safety of the Netherlands from the attacks of France. In 1688, just at the time when William was meditating his descent upon England, the attitude of the Empire and the German Princes had become so threatening that Lewis XIV. decided to declare war at once. His wisest plan would have been to send his troops into Holland, which would have made William's descent upon England impossible, for under such dangerous circumstances the Dutch could not have spared their Captain-General with the flower of their troops. But Lewis XIV.'s aim was to crush the House of Austria, so as to render easier his future schemes on Spain. He seems to have lacked the intuition which would have shown him that William of Orange was really his most formidable enemy, and that everything should be sacrificed to

keep him from establishing himself in England. The French troops were ordered into the Palatinate, and laid siege to Philipsburg; and the Dutch, whom Lewis XIV. had estranged by his interference with their commerce, and by his persecution of the Protestants, no longer hesitated to give William of Orange full liberty to act as he liked.

Lewis XIV. was then at the height of his power and had been on the throne for forty-five years. He had become King at the age of four and a half, and for the first eighteen years of his reign all power had been in the hands of his great minister, Cardinal Mazarin. But on Mazarin's death, in 1661, Lewis XIV. showed at once that he meant to be king indeed. Mazarin had no successor, and Lewis XIV. himself was his own first minister. He astonished every one by this decision; for till then none had suspected that he was possessed of any great powers. His education had been shamefully neglected; he was entirely illiterate, and was said to have shown as a boy an utter incapacity to learn. But he soon made it clear, when he took the management of affairs into his own hands, that he possessed enormous industry, and an indomitable power of will. He had no real greatness; he could never rise above personal ambition and desire for personal aggrandisement, which with him was an intense passion. He believed implicitly in himself and in his own greatness, and knew with consummate art how to act as a great king. Mazarin whilst accumulating an immense fortune for himself had

always kept Lewis XIV. short of money, and magnificence at Court had been impossible under his rule. Lewis XIV. when he became his own master set to work at once to make his Court the most magnificent in Europe. With his love for hard work he united a great delight in the amusements of life. His fine person and elegant manners fitted him to be the centre of a gay and splendid Court. He disdained none of the accomplishments of a courtier, and was distinguished for his graceful dancing. His Court was as licentious as that of Charles II. of England; but there was more decorum in its licence. It absorbed into itself all the life of the French nation. This was the great age of French literature, and all the poets and writers of the day formed part of Lewis XIV.'s Court, and wrote for him and at his bidding. Paris was adorned with splendid works of art to commemorate his greatness. The Louvre and St. Germains were embellished; the splendid palace of Versailles was built because Lewis XIV. wished to have his Court away from Paris. In all his actions we see an intense desire to gratify himself and to add to the greatness of his house; for France itself he had no care. In his personal relations he was equally cold and selfish. He was incapable of real passion, and though he loved one woman after another, his love was to him nothing but a necessary amusement, and when he tired of one favourite he quickly turned to another.

By himself he would never have reached the pitch of greatness which he did; but fortune surrounded him with a number of great ministers whose talents he knew how to value. Cardinal Richelieu, and his successor and pupil Cardinal Mazarin, had raised France to a political importance in Europe which she had never before enjoyed; Lewis XIV. inherited the fruits of their policy. To his Minister of Finance, Colbert, he owed an enormous increase in the wealth and resources of the nation. Colbert encouraged manufacture and created French commerce. He introduced almost every year some new manufacture into France, and watched over it with fostering care. This prosperity was not likely to last; for it depended chiefly on the manufacture of the luxuries demanded by an expensive Court and a magnificent King, and Colbert's theory was in all cases to encourage trade by protection. But he made the country rich enough to supply the enormous demands made upon it by Lewis XIV., both for his domestic expenses and his wars. In Lionne, his Minister for Foreign Affairs, Lewis XIV. possessed one of the most acute diplomatists of that or any other age. Colbert during his later years experienced much opposition from Louvois, the Minister of War, a man of strong overbearing character, with great genius in military matters, who had no scruples as to the means he employed, and desired to have the entire management of affairs in his own hands. It was from him that

Lewis XIV. received the most powerful support in his aggressions upon Europe.

Lewis XIV. desired to remake his frontier according to his own pleasure. In 1674 he added Franche Comté to his dominions; in 1679 he established Chambers of Reunion to examine the changes made in the frontier by the treaties of Westphalia, Aix-la-Chapelle, and Nimeguen. Of course these Chambers settled all disputed points as Lewis XIV. wished, and he at once occupied with his troops the districts which they awarded to him. He strengthened his frontier by an iron chain of fortresses planned by Vauban, the most skilful engineer of the day, and was not afraid to defy all Europe. The death of Colbert and Lionne left things more than ever in his own hands, and Lewis XIV. felt himself competent to manage everything. Colbert had humoured him by letting him believe that he did everything himself, and Lewis XIV. believed implicitly in his own capacity. But difficult times were at hand; for he had managed by his aggressions to set all Europe against him, and by his impolitic zeal for the Catholic religion he weakened his position at home.

During the latter half of his life he fell completely under the influence of Mme. de Maintenon. She was a woman of a serious and religious turn of mind, who came to the Palace as governess to some of Lewis XIV.'s children. After the death of the Queen Maria Theresa, in 1683, Lewis XIV. was privately married to Mme. de Maintenon,

though she was never acknowledged as Queen. Under her influence the character of the Court gradually changed, and religion became the fashion. The Jesuits obtained complete mastery over the King, and he thought to atone for his former irregular life by acts of bigoted religious zeal. The climax of his Catholic zeal was the revocation in 1685 of the Edict of Nantes, by which Henry IV. had granted sufficient toleration to the Huguenots to enable them to live in safety. Lewis XIV. had begun by permitting the most horrible persecutions, and encouraging forced conversions, brought about by quartering soldiers on the unhappy Protestant families. Now Protestant worship was entirely forbidden, and all children were ordered to be brought up as Catholics, whilst severe measures were taken to prevent any Huguenots from flying the country. This treatment of the Protestants was not only cruel, it was also most foolish and short-sighted. At the beginning of Lewis XIV.'s reign there were nearly two million Huguenots in France. They were the most industrious and intelligent citizens in the country; they had produced some of the bravest soldiers and some of the ablest financiers, and were clever artificers in every branch of manufacture. The revocation of the Edict of Nantes compelled these loyal and useful subjects to flee, at peril of their life, leaving all their goods behind them, to countries where they might find toleration for their religion. Many went to

England, many to Holland, to Switzerland, and the Protestant countries of Germany. Everywhere they were welcomed and protected; for if Lewis XIV. could not appreciate their value, other governments were not slow to see the advantages that might be reaped from their thrifty habits and skill in manufacture. Even now it is easy to see the way in which English manufacture profited by the aid of the French refugees; and amongst the wealthiest as well as the poorest of our fellow-countrymen, we continually notice names which show us that their ancestors were amongst those whom the cruelty of Lewis XIV. forced to seek a new home in a foreign land.

In 1688 Lewis XIV.'s power and magnificence seemed as great as ever; but there were not wanting signs which showed that the fabric which he had raised was a hollow one, and could not last. Colbert was dead, and could no longer keep the finances in order by his wise measures. Lionne was no longer there to keep foreign Courts in good temper by wise and flattering words; only Louvois remained to stir up the willing King to new wars and new aggressions. William of Orange had been allowed to gain peaceable possession of the English Crown; and now, as soon as he had settled the government in England, he was enabled to obtain from Parliament what indeed was the chief object of his schemes—a declaration of war against France. England, whom by more cautious measures Lewis XIV. might have kept neutral, if not his

ally, was now with the rest of Europe arrayed against him.

In May, 1689, William sent some of the best English regiments, under the Earl of Marlborough, to join the Dutch army, which was commanded by the Prince of Waldeck. They were opposed by a French army of superior numbers, and were only able to act on the defensive. But Marlborough found opportunities of showing his skill and promptitude, in a manner which called down upon him the warm praise of the Prince of Waldeck and of William himself.

During Marlborough's absence on the Continent his wife had employed herself in an agitation to secure a large income for the Princess Anne. Anne, as heir-presumptive to the throne, was a person of considerable importance, and she was at present entirely under the influence of the Marlboroughs. They felt that they could best increase their importance by increasing hers, and encouraged her to demand from Parliament a large income which should be independent of the Crown. Lady Marlborough employed all her energy in canvassing the Tories to gain their support to this proposal. William and Mary were deeply hurt when they discovered what was being done without any consultation with them. Mary remonstrated with her sister, but found her quite obstinate; attempts were made to persuade Lady Marlborough to desist from her endeavours, but she showed an insolent determination to go her own way. Anne was

extremely popular; the Tories were in a majority in the House of Commons, and it was hoped that by an appeal to Parliament Anne might get a larger income than she could obtain from a private arrangement with William and Mary. But when her friends named seventy thousand pounds a year, they found that they had asked too much from a country already overburdened by the demands made upon its resources. At last a compromise was effected. Anne declared herself contented with fifty thousand pounds, and William agreed that it should be settled on her by Act of Parliament. Anne at once rewarded Lady Marlborough by giving her a pension of a thousand pounds a year. These proceedings did not tend to make William and Mary look upon Lady Marlborough with much favour.

After his first campaign in Holland, Marlborough was not immediately sent back to the Continent. His presence in England was thought advisable to form one of a Council of Nine, who were to advise Mary on the conduct of affairs whilst William was compelled to be absent in Ireland.

The state of affairs in Ireland was alarming, and called for active interference. James II. had appointed as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland the Earl of Tyrconnel, an unscrupulous Papist. Tyrconnel had refused to enter into any communications with William, and having raised a large army of Irish Catholics, sent to summon James from France to place himself at their head. Lewis XIV. agreed

to furnish James and the Irish with troops and money, hoping that disturbances in Ireland would make it impossible for William to interfere actively in Continental affairs. Lewis XIV. parted from James with warm expressions of friendship. "I hope," he said, "that we are about to part never to meet again in this world. But if any evil chance should force you to return, be assured that you will find me to the last such as you have found me hitherto."

James landed in Ireland in February, 1689, and found most of the country in the hands of Tyrconnel; but he had to suffer much from the quarrels of his partisans. Tyrconnel and the Irish Catholics really cared nothing for James. Their object was to seize this opportunity of freeing themselves from the supremacy of England. James was only useful because he brought with him the aid of the King of France. The English Jacobites, on the other hand, looked upon James's success in Ireland only as a step to his return to England. But though James's Court at Dublin was disturbed by disputes, the position of Irish affairs was very formidable to William. Fortunately James's proceedings in Ireland were not such as to awaken any sympathy for him in England. He showed that misfortunes had not taught him wisdom; for he favoured none but Catholics, and allowed the Irish to persecute the English colonists.

In July, 1689, William was at last able to send

an army into Ireland; he chose as its general a French Protestant, the Duke of Schomberg, who rather than lay aside his faith had left a great position in France, and gone out into the world as a refugee when nearly eighty years of age. He had accompanied William in his descent upon England as general of his army, and was extremely popular amongst the English. But in spite of his veteran skill he was able to do little in Ireland with an army of raw troops. William determined to go to Ireland himself with a greater force, and bring the struggle to an end.

Lewis XIV. took steps to strengthen James's position by sending him a reinforcement of French troops. At the same time he dispatched a great French fleet into the English Channel. Mary and her Council sent orders to the English admiral, Torrington, to engage the French in battle. Torrington fought in a half-hearted way, and the French gained a decided victory off Beachy Head. Whilst London, terrified at this defeat, was hourly dreading a French invasion, news came that William had won a decisive battle on the Boyne (July 1st, 1690). The veteran Schomberg had perished on the field, but the Irish and French forces were completely routed. James fled to Dublin whilst the battle was still raging, and escaped to France.

The Battle of the Boyne settled the course of the war in Ireland. Nothing remained to be done except the gradual reduction of such places as still held out for James. In the Council of Nine,

Marlborough recommended that, as there was no longer any danger of invasion since the French fleet had returned to France, an English fleet with five thousand troops on board should be sent to the South of Ireland, where some important places still held out for James. The majority of the Council strongly opposed him; but Mary referred the proposal to William, who heartily approved, and the conduct of the expedition was entrusted to Marlborough.

William returned to London in the autumn, and Marlborough was then at Portsmouth waiting for a fair wind to take his ships to Ireland. He sailed on the 18th September, and reached Cork on the 21st. He acted with great promptitude; the Irish made a stout resistance; but in forty-eight hours the place was taken. Marlborough lost no time, and a few hours after Cork had fallen sent his cavalry on to Kinsale. This too was speedily captured. It was the most convenient port for intercourse with France, and its forts were found to be stocked with wheat and wine.

The damp climate was so trying to the English that disease soon showed itself amongst Marlborough's troops, and compelled him to bring the campaign to an end. He returned to Kensington only five weeks after he had sailed. William welcomed him most warmly. "No officer living," he said, "who has seen so little service as my Lord Marlborough, is so fit for great commands."

Affairs on the Continent next demanded Wil-

liam's attention. The strength of the coalition against Lewis XIV. had been increased by the support of the Duke of Savoy, who had been won over from the side of Lewis. The advantages of the war had, on the whole, been with the French; but William's success in Ireland enabled him to go abroad himself with more troops, and though no battle was won, nothing was lost.

William's absences on the Continent, and the importance of foreign politics, left conspirators at home ample opportunity to plot against the Government. There were plenty of discontented minds in England, men who thought that the new state of things had not done for them all that they expected and deserved, men again who, now that they no longer felt the tyranny of James II., repented that they had been led away to rebel against their King. The greater part of the conspirators were actuated by no decided principles; they had no particular wish to restore James II., but the future seemed to them so dark and uncertain, that they held it wise for their own interests to be, if possible, on friendly terms with James, so that they might not suffer should he be restored. It is hopeless to look for high principles amongst the statesmen and courtiers of those days. Political morality never sank so low as it did after the Restoration, and the men who administered the government of William and Mary had been trained at the Court of Charles II.

Some of the chief men in the Government now

entered into communications with James; one of these was Edward Russell, a leading Whig, who as Admiral of the Fleet commanded the united forces of England and Holland. He was irritable and discontented by nature, and thought that sufficient favour had not been shown to his relatives. Marlborough, who had not scrupled to betray James II. to William, now did not scruple of his own accord to offer all the assistance in his power to the Jacobite conspirators. He was entirely wanting in those qualities which would have made him a faithful adherent to any cause. With all his splendid ability, he had no fine sense of honour, no motive higher than self-interest. He would serve William as long as it seemed clear that William was on the winning side; but as soon as he saw that there was any chance of the Jacobite plots succeeding, he thought it well to make friends with James again. He knew that James regarded him with bitter anger, that he had said repeatedly he would never forgive him; he therefore made humble approaches to the Jacobite conspirators. He expressed his deep sorrow for his former base treachery, and his willingness to do anything in his power to show his repentance. He kept up during several years communications with James's court at St. Germains, and from time to time gave information of the measures of the Government at home. But he never threw himself entirely into the cause of the exiled King, nor fulfilled all the promises he made him; he only

did just enough to secure for himself a promise of pardon, should James be restored to the throne.

It was partly owing to Marlborough's influence that Lord Godolphin, the First Lord of the Treasury, was at last persuaded by the Jacobites to enter into communications with James. Godolphin and Marlborough were bound to one another by a sincere friendship, proceeding partly from a sense of community of interest, but at any rate rare in those days, for till Godolphin's death nothing ever produced a difference between them, and they worked together in entire concord. Godolphin had first risen to importance in Charles II.'s reign as a Commissioner of the Treasury. He was a patient, hard-working man, and so thoroughly mastered the details of finance that he became an invaluable servant to any government. He had no passions, no decided principles which would lead him to prefer one party to another. He was ready to work with any government if he could secure for himself a comfortable and lucrative position; and he was so honest and trustworthy in financial matters as to ensure for himself wonderful success in public life. Charles II. had said of him, "Sidney Godolphin is never in the way, and never out of the way;" and the truth of this saying is shown by the manner in which each successive government made use of him. Even James II., who as a rule trusted only Papists, gave Godolphin his confidence. He was made Chamberlain to James's Queen, and did not scruple

in fulfilling the duties of his office to give her his hand when she went to mass. Later James II. made him again a Commissioner of the Treasury. William so clearly saw his usefulness that in 1690 he made him First Commissioner of the Treasury, and put complete confidence in him. It was only unwillingly at first that Godolphin listened to the proposals of the Jacobites, but, like Marlborough, he soon felt that it would be wise to secure a promise of pardon from James, and to gain this he too made occasional communications about the measures of the Government to St. Germains.

These treacherous proceedings were not at all suspected. In 1691 William took Marlborough with him to the Continent, where he assisted in preparations for the next campaign. His talents drew considerable attention upon him. When William asked the Prince of Vaudemont, one of the ablest commanders in the Dutch service, his opinion of the English generals, he answered, "Kirk has fire, Laneir thought, Mackay skill, and Colchester bravery; but there is something inexpressible in the Earl of Marlborough. All their virtues seem to be united in his single person. If I can read what is written in his face, no subject of your Majesty can ever attain such a height of military glory as that to which this combination of sublime perfections must raise him." William answered with a smile, "I believe the Earl of Marlborough will do his part to verify your prediction."

At his return to England, Marlborough entered into closer connexion than ever with the Jacobites. He determined to make use of the growing feeling of discontent amongst the English at the favour shown by the King to his own countrymen, and to bring an address into the House of Lords requesting the King to remove all foreigners from his service. Marlborough hoped in this way to get rid of all the Dutch troops in England; he thought that his popularity with the English army would enable him to lead it as he liked, and that by a bloodless revolution he could bring back James to the throne. But the Jacobites distrusted his promises; they thought that, once master of the situation, he would not use it for the benefit of James, but would prefer to place the Princess Anne on the throne, since his influence over her was such that, were she Queen, he would be able to rule the country in her name. His plans were therefore made known to William by the Jacobites themselves, and William saw at once that it was impossible to leave a man capable of such treachery in high command in the army. In January, 1692, Marlborough was deprived of all his offices, and forbidden to appear in the royal presence. The true cause of his disgrace was not known at the time. It would have been impossible to make the Jacobites appear publicly against him, and many surmises on the subject were afloat. The truth has become known to us through the memoirs of James II.

Though the Princess Anne was told by her sister of the causes which had led to Marlborough's disgrace, she would not be separated from her beloved friends. After three weeks she even allowed Lady Marlborough to go to Court with her. This was too much for Mary; she wrote an angry letter to Anne, bidding her at once dismiss Lady Marlborough from her service. Anne answered, that there was no misery she would not rather suffer than be parted from her friend; but William and Mary remained firm, and Anne left the Court rather than lose Lady Marlborough. She removed with her household to Sion House, on the Thames; and during the remainder of Mary's life, lived either there or at Berkeley House, in Piccadilly. The breach between her and William and Mary was complete; they spared no pains to show their indignation at her conduct. Her income could not be touched; but her guard of honour was taken away, and the foreign ministers no longer waited upon her.

On the 5th May of the same year Marlborough was suddenly arrested on a charge of high treason, and carried to the Tower. A wretched man named Young, who was at that moment imprisoned in Newgate on a charge of forgery, hoped to gain distinction for himself by making known an imaginary plot to the Government. He had forged the signatures of Marlborough and other distinguished persons to a document, in which the subscribers bound themselves to take up arms in the cause of

James. The whole thing was such a transparent forgery that, after a few weeks' detention in the Tower, Marlborough was released on bail. This false accusation was really useful to him; for the people regarded him as an innocent man wrongly accused, and had little idea how near Young came to the truth. It was thought that the loss of his offices, a few months before, might be as undeserved as his imprisonment in the Tower. But this imprisonment increased his hostility against the Government, and he lost no opportunity of opposing it in the House of Lords, and kept up his communications with James at St. Germains. In 1694 an opportunity presented itself of doing an act which would convince James of his sincerity. The war on the Continent still went on, and Lewis XIV., anxious to strike a blow on Spain, determined to send his fleet into the Mediterranean to attack Barcelona. William sent Russell after the French fleet with the greater part of the combined Dutch and English fleets, and made arrangements for a descent upon Brest by a body of troops under General Talmash. He hoped that, in the absence of the French fleet, the place might easily be taken. The plan was kept a profound secret; but Marlborough discovered it, and gave notice of it to James, who gave information to the French Government. Preparations were at once taken to meet the attack. Adverse gales detained the English, and gave the French ample time. Talmash, confident that his attack was unexpected, landed in

spite of clear signs that there were troops ready to oppose him. He was greeted by a heavy fire, and was himself one of the first to perish; his troops only succeeded in re-embarking after suffering terrible loss. Talmash was one of the ablest English generals, and Marlborough is said by some to have betrayed him from a desire for the death or disgrace of a possible rival; but the baseness of his conduct remains the same, whether it arose from mere personal ambition or from a desire to ingratiate himself with James. Whilst the country was mourning over this disaster, of which he was the cause, he presented himself at Whitehall, and asked permission to use once more his sword for William and Mary. William knew well his splendid abilities, and often regretted that he could not make use of them; but he had learnt to regard him with deep suspicion, and sent back from the Netherlands, where he then was, a short and dry refusal to Marlborough's entreaty: "I can say no more," he wrote, "than that I do not think it for the good of my service to intrust the command of any troops to him."

Marlborough's whole attitude was changed by the death of Queen Mary in 1694. Mary was still in the prime of life when, after a few days' illness, she was carried off by small-pox. William's grief was so violent that, after he had been carried away insensible from her bedside, men feared for his reason and his life. The Queen's bright, amiable nature had gained her the love of her people, and

never had the death of a sovereign caused such genuine and profound grief. But to Marlborough her death opened a bright prospect. It was entirely unexpected. William's wretched constitution had made his early death highly probable; then Mary might have married again, and had children to succeed her on the throne; at any rate she was little older than Anne, and was strong and vigorous; there was no reason for thinking that Anne would ever come to the throne. Now everything was changed. William with his feeble health could not live long; a few years would see Anne on the throne, and then Marlborough would be all-powerful. He could afford to bide his time. A reconciliation between Anne and William followed immediately on Mary's death, and William's animosity to the Marlboroughs gradually decreased. But in 1696 Marlborough was suddenly threatened by a disclosure of his treasonable relations with James.

A well-known Jacobite conspirator, Sir John Fenwick, was arrested and imprisoned. In terror for his life, he sought to save himself by promising to make a confession to the King of all he knew about the Jacobite plots. He drew up his confession, and named as the chief conspirators Russell, Godolphin, Marlborough, and Shrewsbury, then Secretary of State. To William it was no news that these men were engaged in a treasonable correspondence. But he knew well that, except for a few rare exceptions, he would look in vain

amongst English statesmen of that day for men upon whose fidelity he could count. He now professed surprise and incredulity at Fenwick's confession, which he forwarded at once to Shrewsbury himself. Marlborough's perfect command of temper enabled him to listen to the accusation with the contempt and indifference of conscious innocence. The matter was brought before the House of Lords, and there Marlborough rose and said: "I assure your lordships, that since the accession of his present Majesty, I have had no intercourse with Sir John on any subject whatever, and this I declare on my word of honour." His words may have been true, but they are nothing more than a clever quibble when we consider the treason of which he was really guilty. Godolphin excused himself with many protestations. But Shrewsbury, though the least guilty of them all, was too ashamed to appear, and insisted on resigning his secretaryship. Godolphin had resigned his office as soon as Fenwick's confession became known; the Whigs, who hated him as the one Tory in high power, brought pressure upon him to do so, and William gladly accepted his resignation. Fenwick's attempts to save his life by accusing others were useless, and he was executed under a bill of attainder.

Fenwick's confession made no difference in William's feelings about Marlborough; he saw that self-interest would make him a useful servant for the future, and so the past might be forgot-

ten. Anne's eldest child, the Duke of Gloucester, was now nearly nine years of age, and it was thought that he ought to have a separate establishment. In accordance with Anne's earnest wish, William appointed the Earl of Marlborough his governor, whilst his literary training was confided to Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury. Marlborough's appointment was received with general favour, as he was then extremely popular. Shortly afterwards he was again sworn a member of the Privy Council, and when the King was about to go to Holland, in 1698, Marlborough was named one of the nine Lords Justices who were to govern the country in his absence.

CHAPTER V.

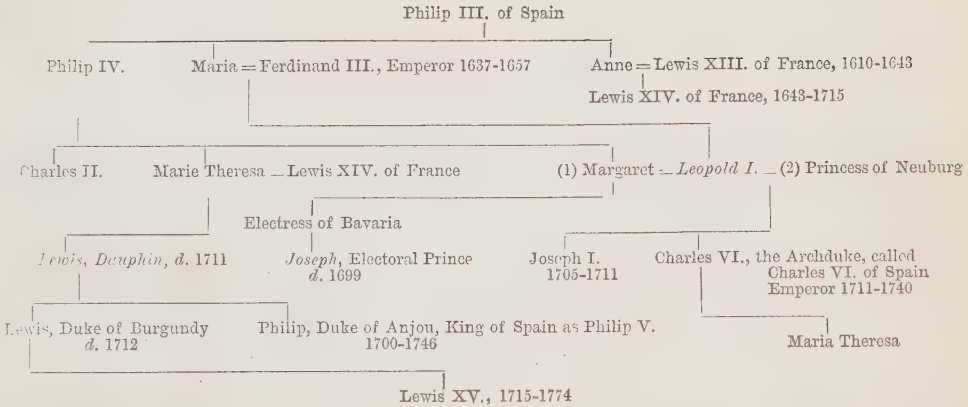
The Spanish Succession.

THE war between France and the Allies had lasted till 1697. At first Lewis XIV. directed all his attention to crush William. When affairs in Ireland proved hopeless, he had, in 1692, fitted out a great fleet to invade England and restore James. The French and the Jacobites hoped that Russell would not fight, and that the French fleet would cross the Channel without opposition. But Russell was just then out of temper with James; he declared that if attacked he must do his duty and fight his best. By his brilliant victory off La Hogue he brought back the mastery of the seas into English hands, and put an end to James's hopes of restoration. After this the war was confined to the Continent, and Lewis's armies fought in the Netherlands, on the Rhine, in Italy, and in Spain. Lewis XIV. won victories, and took some strong cities, but on the whole he did not make much way. William was not a successful general, but he was wary and cautious; he was never crushed by defeat, but always showed himself bravest and most cheerful

when everything seemed against him. His policy was to stand on the defensive, and to prevent great battles. France was exhausted by the immense strain upon her resources, and bad harvests had spread discontent amongst the people. Lewis XIV. was glad in 1697 to make proposals of peace. He showed himself singularly moderate; the truth was that he wished to be on good terms with the rest of Europe, so as to have matters his own way with regard to the Spanish Succession. On the 20th Feb., 1697, after many tedious negotiations, prolonged by the difficulties raised by Austria and Spain, the Treaty of Ryswick was signed. By it the hopes of the Jacobites were crushed; for Lewis XIV. at last acknowledged William as King of England, and Anne as his successor. Amongst the treaties concluded by Lewis XIV. during the course of his long reign, the Peace of Ryswick is important as being the first which showed the resistance his power was beginning to meet. This treaty was clearly not likely really to settle the points in dispute, but it showed that Europe was determined that Lewis XIV. should not have things all his own way.

On the conclusion of the peace, William for the first time sent an ambassador to Paris. The person chosen for this important post was William's oldest and most trusted friend, Bentinck, a Dutchman, whom he had made Duke of Portland. The ambassador found one cause for indignant complaint. In spite of the late treaty, James was still allowed

to keep up his mockery of a Court at St. Germains; and English refugees, who were known to have formed the basest plots against William's life, crowded the terraces of Versailles. But nothing would persuade Lewis XIV. to banish James, and Portland had to drop the subject in disgust. During this embassy, the question which lay nearest Lewis XIV.'s heart was at last discussed. Charles II., the miserable and sickly King of Spain, could not live much longer. He was childless, and the decision as to his successor could not safely be put off. In spite of her vast dominions, Spain was at that time of absolutely no account in Europe. The different provinces which made up that mighty kingdom had nothing in common beyond their King. Nothing could give Castile, Valencia, Aragon, the Milanese, the Spanish Netherlands, the Two Sicilies, and the extensive American colonies, any real unity but the firm hand of a powerful ruler; and Charles II. was sickly and feeble, hopelessly infirm both in body and mind from his infancy. In the hands of a powerful king Spain might once more become a power of the first rank; it was therefore of deep importance to all Europe who the next king should be. Three competitors presented themselves — the French Dauphin, the Emperor of Austria (Leopold I.), and Joseph, the Electoral Prince of Bavaria. Their respective claims are shown in the following table:


Philip III. of Spain
Philip IV.
Maria = Ferdinand III., Emperor 1637-1657
Anne = Lewis XIII. of France, 1610-1643
Lewis XIV. of France, 1643-1715
Charles II.
Marie Theresa — Lewis XIV. of France
(1) Margaret — Leopold I. — (2) Princess of Neuburg
Electress of Bavaria
Lewis, Dauphin, d. 1711
Joseph, Electoral Prince d. 1699
Joseph I. 1705-1711
Charles VI., the Archduke, called Charles VI. of Spain Emperor 1711-1740
Lewis, Duke of Burgundy d. 1712
Philip, Duke of Anjou, King of Spain as Philip V. 1700-1746
Maria Theresa
Lewis XV., 1715-1774

Of these three the French Dauphin undoubtedly had the best right, as regarded blood relationship. But Maria Theresa, on her marriage with Lewis XIV., had solemnly renounced her claim to the Spanish Succession, and this renunciation had been ratified by Lewis XIV. with the most binding oaths, and incorporated into the Peace of the Pyrenees (1659). The Infanta Margaret, grandmother of the Electoral Prince, had also renounced her claims on her marriage with the Emperor Leopold, but her renunciation had not been made with the same formalities which were observed in the case of her sister Maria Theresa. The Emperor Leopold, who felt that it would be impossible for him to succeed to the throne in person, had handed on his claim to his second son, the Archduke Charles. The French Dauphin in the same way had made over his claim to his second son, Philip, Duke of Anjou. But the accession either of a Prince of the House of Austria or of a Prince of the House of Bourbon to the vast monarchy of Spain would have entirely disturbed the balance of power in Europe. So it came about that of the three candidates the Electoral Prince was generally preferred, because, having no power of his own, his accession would leave the balance of power as it stood. Lewis XIV. was anxious to get, in compensation for his grandson's claim, some considerable portion of the Spanish dominions. He bade his ministers confer on this point with Portland whilst he was in Paris, and finally sent

Tallard as ambassador to London to lay the matter before William.

After many discussions in London William went over to Holland to his favourite palace, St. Loo, and was joined there by Tallard, and by Portland from Paris. Heinsius, the Great Pensionary of Holland, to whom William confided all his plans, was also present at their deliberations, and together they concluded the treaty known as the First Partition Treaty, which was signed at the Hague on the 11th October, 1698. By it the Electoral Prince was to have Spain, the Indies, and the Spanish Netherlands, and Lewis XIV. pledged himself to support his pretensions. The French Dauphin was to have the province of Guipuscoa in the north of Spain, and the Two Sicilies. The Archduke Charles was to have the Milanese. Neither Spain, whose monarchy was thus ruthlessly divided into portions, nor Austria were parties to this treaty, which was kept profoundly secret. It is highly probable that it might have been peacefully carried out, for it seemed calculated to satisfy the demands of the three candidates, and Spain left to itself was not capable of making its voice heard. But in February, 1699, the Electoral Prince died of the small-pox, and the whole question had to be opened again.

Lewis XIV. at once came forward with larger claims, but after some negotiations a Second Partition Treaty was concluded between William, Lewis XIV., and Heinsius, according to which

Spain, the Indies, and the Spanish Netherlands were to fall to the Archduke Charles, whilst France was to have the Italian provinces. Negotiations were opened with the Emperor of Austria to prevail upon him to agree. The terms of this Second Partition Treaty, as they became gradually known, excited great indignation in Spain, where the grandees naturally wished that their splendid monarchy should be kept together, and were disgusted that foreigners should presume to divide it without even consulting them. They therefore prevailed upon the wretched Charles II. to make a will in which he declared Philip Duke of Anjou, second son of the Dauphin, the sole heir to his vast monarchy.

When Charles II. died, in November, 1700, and this will became known, it seemed for a moment doubtful what course Lewis XIV. would take. But he did not hesitate long, and, in spite of the solemn renunciation he had made, and the treaties he had signed, he accepted for his grandson the magnificent inheritance of the undivided Spanish monarchy. At the moment no resistance was possible, and the Duke of Anjou peaceably mounted the Spanish throne with the title of Philip V. William was amazed; even from Lewis XIV. he had not expected such treachery. But at the moment he was powerless to do anything; he had never been very popular in England, and since the Peace of Ryswick party struggles had increased his unpopularity, and brought about

events which mortified him deeply. Both Whigs and Tories had united to compel him to disband the greater part of the fine army which he had led against Lewis XIV. He had been obliged to dismiss his faithful and experienced Dutch regiments from the English service. The Tories had the upper hand in the House of Commons, and regarded his Whig Ministry with abhorrence. It followed that the English Parliament was more willing to accept the accession of the Duke of Anjou to the throne of Spain than they would have been to see the terms of the Partition Treaty carried out. The people judged everything from a commercial point of view, and thought that English commerce in the Mediterranean would suffer greatly if the Two Sicilies were made over to the French, whilst they thought that if the Duke of Anjou became King of Spain he would soon put Spanish before French interests, and would not let the French grow supreme at sea.

In 1701 a new House of Commons met, in which the Tories were supreme. Portland tried in vain to defend the Partition Treaty, and in the course of discussion needlessly alluded to the First Partition Treaty, the existence of which had till then remained a profound secret. This aroused a new storm, and those Whig ministers who had aided the King in making the Partition Treaties were impeached for the share they had taken in them; but they were not actually brought to trial, for in the House of Lords they were sure of a

majority. With Parliament in this temper William thought it well to recognize the Duke of Anjou as King of Spain; but events soon occurred which showed that his anxiety had been well grounded. Lewis XIV. sent his own troops to garrison the barrier fortresses in the Netherlands. It became clear that the Spanish Netherlands would no longer act as a barrier between France and Holland, and that the Dutch would be at the mercy of Lewis XIV. When in June, 1701, William prorogued Parliament, signs were not wanting to show that the temper of the nation was changing. He now sent ten thousand troops under Marlborough into the Netherlands, and shortly followed himself to negotiate an alliance between Holland, Austria, and England. This alliance, known as the Grand Alliance, was concluded in September, 1701. The confederates felt themselves too weak to hope to accomplish much, and did no more than pledge themselves to see what could be done during two months by peaceful negotiations, after which they would attempt to recover by force of arms Milan for Austria and the barrier fortresses for Holland.

But William soon found himself in a position to do more. On the 16th September James died at St. Germains, and, in direct contradiction to the Treaty of Ryswick, Lewis XIV. acknowledged James's son, James Edward, as King of England. Lewis XIV. was persuaded into this very foolish act by the influence of Mme. de

Maintenon, who strongly favoured the Stuarts. Just at the moment when it was most important to keep the English people in good temper with him, he roused all their animosity by an act which could do no good to any one. England once more was inflamed with violent indignation against Lewis XIV., who had presumed to decide who should be her King. William seized the opportunity to dissolve Parliament, and the new elections once more gave a Whig government a majority in the House. Now both Whigs and Tories were for war. It was agreed to set on foot a land force of forty thousand men, and forty thousand more were voted for the navy. At the same time a bill of attainder was passed against the young Prince of Wales, declaring him guilty of high treason for assuming the title of King of England.

About this time William seems to have again taken the Earl of Marlborough into confidence. He looked upon him as the man who would in reality rule England after him, and as the only Englishman capable of upholding the Grand Alliance, and waging war against France with success. He wished therefore to initiate him into his plans, and so be able to feel sure that the coalition against France would not fail for want of a head. Marlborough had everything to gain by following William's policy. It was entirely in his interest that Anne should be secure on the throne, and war would give him an opportunity for

showing his great ability, and winning that grand position to which his unlimited ambition made him aspire. The death of the young Duke of Gloucester, in 1700, had increased the anxiety about the succession; for all Anne's other children had died in infancy. In consequence a Bill of Succession was passed in the House of Commons in 1700, by which, in default of any issue from Anne, the Crown was settled on the Electress Sophia of Hanover and her children. She was the only surviving child of Elizabeth, daughter of James I. of England, who had married the Elector Palatine. In this way the Protestant succession was ensured, and it became the interest of Marlborough to uphold the existing state of things. To support the restoration of the Stuarts would be to exclude Anne from the throne, and from Anne's accession Marlborough had everything to hope.

William was now once more in a proud position. He was the head of a great European coalition against Lewis XIV., and he was supported by the English Parliament in his desire to humble the power of France; but, as he had expected, he was forced to leave his work for others to finish. Whilst riding in the park at Hampton Court one day, his horse stumbled over a mole-hill; William was thrown, and broke his collar-bone. In the wretched state of his health he had not strength to rally from this slight accident, and died on the 8th March, 1702.

The English people welcomed the accession of

Anne with joy. They had never looked upon William as one of themselves. They had felt that he was necessary to them, but they had not loved him. Accustomed to the genial familiar manners of Charles II., they thought William cold and harsh. They resented the preference he showed for his Dutch favourites, the tried friends of his youth, and were angry that he should still prefer Holland to his adopted country. We cannot wonder that William on his side never loved England. Himself inspired by one great aim, for which he was ready to sacrifice everything, he had to do in England with men who cared for nothing but their own interest—men in whom he could put no confidence, since he knew that while they served him they were in league with his enemies. Amongst the English statesmen of that day there was hardly one capable of real seriousness of purpose, and it is no wonder that William could never learn to feel at home among them. Yet he had to use such tools as he could find; and though in his disgust at England's ingratitude, he more than once threatened to leave her to her fate, and to return to Holland, he was able to conquer himself, and carry on his work till the end.

Anne was thirty-seven years of age at her accession. She was distinguished by no brilliant qualities; her mind was dull and slow, but her intentions were excellent. She was a devoted wife and mother, and was conscientiously anxious to do her duties as Queen. From her father she

inherited an obstinate stubbornness of temper, which made her cling, in spite of reason or opposition, to any person or any idea that she had come to look upon with favour. Her strongest principle was attachment to the Anglican Church, and this helped at that time to make her personally popular, and to win for her the name of "Good Queen Anne," which she owed rather to her negative than to her positive qualities. Her troubles also had served to endear her to her people; one after another her children had died in infancy or early youth, and she had borne this sorrow with the resignation of a truly pious mind. Politically she was attached to the Tories, because she believed that they favoured the Anglican Church. Her husband, Prince George of Denmark, was even duller than she was. He was a sluggard, who cared for nothing but eating and drinking. "I have tried him drunk, and I have tried him sober," said Charles II., "and there is nothing in him." Still Anne loved her husband with fond affection, and immediately on her accession nominated him Generalissimo of the forces, and Lord High Admiral. Neither did she delay to shower favours upon the Earl of Marlborough and his wife. He was made Knight of the Garter, and was appointed Captain-General of the English forces at home and abroad, and Master of the Ordnance. Lady Marlborough was made Groom of the Stole, Mistress of the Robes, and Keeper of the Privy Purse; whilst her two elder daughters

became Ladies of the Bedchamber. Lady Marlborough had often admired the situation of the Great Lodge at Windsor; and remembering this, Anne now appointed her for life to the rangership of the Park, to which office this lodge was attached. The lodge was much improved by Lady Marlborough, who preferred it to any of her other houses.

In the formation of the new Government Marlborough also had much to do. His sympathies were at that time with the Tories, and the leading Whigs lost their places, and were succeeded by Tories. Godolphin once more became Lord High Treasurer; he had been bound still more closely to Marlborough by the marriage of his eldest son with Marlborough's eldest daughter. One leading Tory was very much disgusted at the turn things were taking. The Earl of Rochester, the Queen's uncle, was, at the time of William's death, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. He had hoped when his niece came to the throne to become Lord Treasurer, and have the management of affairs in his own hands. He had no desire to stay in Ireland away from the Court, and hurried back to England to oppose Marlborough's influence as much as possible. Rochester and some of the more violent Tories wished to exclude the Whigs from all offices, however unimportant. But neither Godolphin nor Marlborough were violent party men; they had no wish to resort to extreme measures and drive the Whigs into decided opposition, and

they carried their way in this matter in spite of Rochester's wishes to the contrary.

Amongst the members of the Grand Alliance William's death had excited great anxiety; but Marlborough's influence moved the Queen to show at once her determination to continue William's policy. Marlborough was sent in the end of March to Holland, on an extraordinary embassy, to arrange future operations with the Dutch. Heinsius, the Pensionary, shared all William's opinions, and with him Marlborough, during his short stay at the Hague, discussed plans and considered the prospects of the Grand Alliance. They decided that England, Holland, and Austria should declare war against France on the same day, and settled the plan of the first campaign. Anne was very anxious that her husband, Prince George, should be appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Allied forces; and though Marlborough knew very well how totally unfit the Prince was for such a post, to please the Queen he tried hard to press his appointment on the Dutch. They, however, steadily refused, and the question was left undecided.

When Marlborough got back to England he found Rochester and his followers anxious to persuade the Queen and the Privy Council that it was unwise for England to take a leading part in the war. But Marlborough by his forcible arguments showed that no half measures would do, and on the 4th May, as had been agreed at the Hague, war was declared. Parliament readily

voted the necessary supplies, and on the 26th May, Marlborough sailed from Margate to join the army in Holland. His wife had gone with him to Margate, and he parted from her in an agony of grief. He wrote to her soon after sailing:

"It is impossible to express with what a heavy heart I parted with you when I was by the water's side. I could have given my life to come back, though I knew my own weakness so much that I durst not, for I knew I should have exposed myself to the company. I did for a great while, with a perspective glass, look upon the cliffs, in hopes I might have had one sight of you. We are now out of sight of Margate, and I have neither soul nor spirits; but I do at this minute suffer so much that nothing but being with you can recompense it."

She was already beginning to give him much trouble by her political views. Her own sympathies inclined strongly to the Whigs, and this led her to many little quarrels with the Queen. She had no tact in managing people, but was always overbearing and interfering, trying to force her own views upon every one. She was a constant trouble to her husband by the way in which she interfered in all the appointments he made, and tried to make him obey her wishes in everything. Marlborough, with his deep love for her, suffered much from her temper; but he did not meekly give way. He met her anger with gentle remonstrances, and by soft persuasive words tried to

bring her back to good temper. She wrote to him to the Hague about some trifling appointment in such an angry tone as to make him miserable. "I do assure you, upon my soul," he answered, "I had much rather the whole world should go wrong than you should be uneasy; for the quiet of my life depends only upon your kindness."

CHAPTER VI.

First Years of the War.

AT first the Grand Alliance consisted only of England, Holland, and the Empire; but other German Princes rapidly joined. The aid of the Elector of Brandenburg was won by his recognition as King of Prussia. His father, Frederic I., known as the Great Elector, had so increased the power of Brandenburg that it had become of great importance in the affairs of Germany, more especially as he had organized a well-trained army. His son, who cared more for shows and dignities than for anything else, reaped the result of his father's labours, and was crowned by the Emperor, King of Prussia in 1701. The Elector of Hanover, the Elector Palatine, and Lewis Margrave of Baden, also joined the Grand Alliance. Lewis XIV. managed to win over to his side the Electors of Bavaria and Cöln. His only other ally was Victor Amadeus II., Duke of Savoy. He was a brave and ambitious prince, and his natural desires would have led him to take part against Lewis XIV., for

his small territory was entirely overshadowed by the mighty power of France, and he felt himself in danger of sinking to the position of a French vassal. But Lewis XIV. spared no trouble to keep him on his side, and had married his grandsons, the Duke of Burgundy and the King of Spain, to two daughters of Victor Amadeus.

At the opening of the campaign of 1702, the French had command of the Spanish Low Countries, of Luxembourg, and of the territories of Cöln and Liege; so that both the southern and the eastern frontier of Holland lay open to them, and the Allies therefore had to defend both the Meuse and the Rhine.

Marlborough, on his arrival at the Hague, was named Commander-in-Chief of the combined English and Dutch forces, with a salary of £10,000, though he had not failed still to press the appointment of Prince George of Denmark. With him were associated the two generals of the Dutch forces—the Duke of Athlone, a Dutchman by birth, and the Prince of Saarbruck. Both of these generals had aspired to be the Commander-in-Chief, and their jealousy of his superiority was at first very troublesome to Marlborough. He was also much hampered by the Field Deputies, whom it was the habit of the Dutch to send with their armies. These men, though not themselves military men, had to be consulted on all occasions, as the Dutch forces could not be moved without their permission, and they were always more likely to be

led by the advice of their own generals than by Marlborough. The Allies were opposed by a French army under the nominal command of the Duke of Burgundy, the Dauphin's eldest son, the real command being in the hands of Marshal Boufflers. Marlborough wished to begin at once with active measures, to cross the Meuse and carry the war into Brabant. He was at the head of about sixty thousand men, and hoped to do great things. But the natural timidity of the Dutch would not allow them to consent to any bold measure. Their constant fear was that their frontier should be left exposed, and it was not till the 26th of July that Marlborough persuaded them to let him lead his army across the Meuse. Near Hamont he soon had an excellent opportunity of attacking the French army; but the fears of the Dutch kept him back, to his bitter disappointment. His aim now was to take from the French some of those fortresses which Lewis XIV. had seized in the Spanish Netherlands, and which gave him the command of the Dutch frontier. During the campaign Marlborough succeeded in reducing four important fortresses on the Meuse —Venloo, Ruremond, Stevenswaeth, and Liege. The ability which he showed called forth the warm admiration even of Athlone, who wrote: "The success of this campaign is solely due to this incomparable chief, since I confess that I, serving as second in command, opposed in all circumstances his opinion and proposals."

Having disposed his army in their winter quarters, Marlborough set out for the Hague, on his way back to England. He journeyed in a boat on the Meuse under the protection of a guard of horsemen, who rode on the banks; but in the darkness of the night the horsemen missed the boat, and Marlborough, with only a guard of twenty-five men, was surprised by a body of French soldiers. Fortunately the French did not know what a prize had fallen into their hands. One of Marlborough's attendants happened to have with him a French pass, which had once been granted to Marlborough's brother, General Churchill. He had the presence of mind to hand it secretly to Marlborough, who on producing it was allowed to pass on. But already the news had got about that Marlborough was a prisoner, and the general consternation was great. Marlborough's own appearance at the Hague put a stop to all anxiety, and he was greeted with great joy. "I was not ashore one minute," he writes, "before I had great crowds of the common people; some endeavouring to take me by the hands, and all crying out, 'Welcome!' But that which moved me most was to see a great many of both sexes cry for joy."

Meanwhile, on the Rhine, the Margrave of Baden had commanded the forces of the Allies, accompanied by the young King of the Romans, Joseph, eldest son of the Emperor. He succeeded in taking Landau; but he was afterwards defeated at Friedlingen by the French General Villars,

who was made a marshal for this victory, but who did not know how to follow it up.

In the Milanese the French under Villeroi were opposed to the Austrian force under Prince Eugene, a general second only to Marlborough in ability. Eugene was a second cousin of Victor Amadeus of Savoy; he had been bred in France, and was to have been a priest, but his own tastes led him to choose the life of a soldier. Lewis XIV. would not give him a commission because of his small stature, and in disgust Eugene left France to enter the service of the Emperor, where he won great distinction in the wars against the Turks. An Italian by descent, but born in France, and now living in Germany, he signed himself Eugenio von Savoye, to show the three nationalities to which he belonged. His long pale face and brilliant eyes showed his Italian origin. He was a man of culture, but a true Italian in the calmness with which he regarded the horrors which war brought about. As a soldier he was distinguished for his dashing courage; he showed himself equally careless of his own safety and of the lives of his soldiers. Even before they met Marlborough and Eugene had conceived a great esteem for one another, which ripened into friendship when they came to know one another. Each admired the other's genius with perfect frankness, and they worked together with the same aim and the same views without any of those jealousies which so often make perfect concord impossible between two

generals in high command. Prince Eugene won a victory at Cremona, and took Villeroi prisoner. Vendome, a far abler general, was sent to succeed Villeroi, and was joined by young King Philip of Spain, who wished to command his armies in person. An indecisive battle was fought with Eugene at Luzara, and at the end of the campaign the French still occupied the Milanese. Eugene had been too feebly supported to do much.

The same year an attack was made on Cadiz by the English and Dutch fleets. This attack had been planned by William, and great results were hoped from it; but there was no one amongst its leaders capable of directing it vigorously. Ormond, the general of the troops, disagreed with Sir George Rooke, the admiral of the fleet; the Dutch and the English quarrelled, and they returned without having effected anything beyond the capture of some Spanish treasure from galleons which had taken refuge at Vigo. On the whole the only marked success of the campaign of 1702 was Marlborough's capture of the fortresses on the Meuse, by which he had done much to protect the Dutch frontier. The news of his success was received with joy in England, and the Tories did not fail to draw comparisons between his campaign and William's. A public thanksgiving was held in St. Paul's, and attended by the Queen and both Houses of Parliament; and both Houses passed votes of thanks to Marlborough for

his services. The Queen determined to show her favour by making him a Duke. She wrote to Lady Marlborough; "It is very uneasy to your poor, unfortunate, faithful Morley to think that she has so very little in her power to show how truly sensible I am of all my Lord Marlborough's kindness, especially at a time when he deserves all that a rich crown could give. But since there is nothing else at this time, I hope you will give me leave as soon as he comes to make him a Duke." Lady Marlborough was not eager for this distinction, as she thought that their wealth was not enough to enable them to support it. But Marlborough himself was not averse to a more dignified title, saying that he thought it would do the Queen's cause on the Continent good if her general were distinguished. The reluctance of Lady Marlborough was overcome by their friends, and the Queen granted Marlborough five thousand pounds a year out of the post-office for her lifetime. She desired the Commons to take measures to settle this sum permanently upon him and his heirs; but here she met with unexpected resistance, Parliament even presenting a remonstrance against her grant. This drove her to still greater generosity, and she added to the five thousand pounds two thousand out of the privy purse.

In the beginning of the year 1703 Marlborough met with a great sorrow. He had only one surviving son, the Marquis of Blandford, a youth of great promise, who now at the age of seventeen

was just finishing his studies at Cambridge, and hoped soon to serve under his father in the Netherlands. Early in February he was taken ill of the small-pox. His father and mother hastened to him; the Queen sent her own doctors, and showed the tenderest anxiety for his safety. But he sank rapidly, and died on the 20th February, to the bitter grief of his parents.

Marlborough had little time to indulge in selfish sorrow, and was soon busy in preparations for the next campaign, for which Parliament had granted him ample supplies. He went to the Hague early in March, and his letters to the Duchess show that their recent loss had only served to bind them closer together. "The greatest ease I now have," he writes, "is sometimes sitting for an hour in my chair alone, and thinking of the happiness I may yet have of living quietly with you, which is the greatest I propose to myself in this world."

In the course of 1703 the Duke of Savoy and the King of Portugal both joined the Grand Alliance. Lewis XIV.'s power was also weakened by a rebellion in the Cevennes. A number of Huguenots had taken refuge from the persecutions of the Government in the rugged fastnesses of these mountains. They formed themselves into bands, and called themselves Camisards, from a kind of white blouse which they wore. Animated by religious fanaticism, they lashed themselves into fervour on the battle-field by wild hymns of

praise. The cruelties they had suffered made them sometimes in turn revenge themselves by equal cruelties on priests and monasteries; and at the approach of regular troops they would escape by unknown mountain paths into secure hiding-places. Their chief leader was Jean Cavalier, a brave and upright man, with a decided talent for war. He turned for aid to the members of the Grand Alliance, and they, though unable to help, were anxious to foment the insurrection, as it diverted some of Lewis XIV.'s troops.

In the campaign of 1703 Lewis XIV. determined to make use of the alliance of the Elector of Bavaria, which opened up to him a large part of the country between France and Austria, and send his armies straight to Vienna, that he might crush with one blow the power of Austria. But the general to whom he entrusted this scheme, Villars, did not co-operate well with the Elector of Bavaria, and the plan failed. In the Netherlands death had freed Marlborough from the rivalry of Athlone and the Prince of Saarbruck, but three new Dutch generals had been appointed in their place—Overkirk, Opdam, and Slangenberg. Overkirk was no longer young, but was a soldier of great ability: from the other two Marlborough met with much opposition. His plan for the campaign had been to invade Brabant and French Flanders, but the Dutch pressed him first to besiege Bonn, with a view of securing the Lower Rhine. Marlborough was obliged to give way to

these timid councils, and Bonn fell on the 16th May. After this Marlborough returned to his old plan, and hoped to signalize the campaign by the capture of Antwerp and Ostend. But he was disappointed in all his hopes by the folly and inefficiency of the Dutch generals, who failed to co-operate with him. He was obliged to return from before Antwerp, after having for five hours tried to persuade a council of the Generals and Field Deputies to attack the French lines, and he had to content himself with the capture of two more fortresses, Huy and Limburg.

Whilst Marlborough was arranging the winter quarters of his troops, he heard that the Archduke Charles, now called Charles III. of Spain, had arrived at Dusseldorf. Success had widened the aims of the Grand Alliance; the Emperor had been emboldened to proclaim his son King of Spain, and in the treaty by which Portugal became a member of the Grand Alliance, the object of the Allies was clearly stated to be to secure the throne of Spain to the Archduke Charles. It was thought right that he should go and fight for his own cause in Spain, and he was now on his way to England, whence he was to sail for Spain. Marlborough hastened to meet him at Dusseldorf, and the young King received him with every possible mark of distinction, and gave him a sword richly set with diamonds, and his portrait, also set with diamonds. Soon afterwards Marlborough returned to England to be ready to receive

Charles, who after a short stay there sailed for Lisbon.

During the whole of the campaign of 1703 Marlborough had been harassed by news of the disturbances produced by the party factions in England. The Tories as a body were only half-hearted in their support of the war. The Earl of Rochester spent all his time in London; all the discontented Tories gathered round him, and passed their time in caballing against the Government. Marlborough and Godolphin persuaded the Queen to order Rochester to return to his post in Ireland, which, as they had expected, he angrily refused to do, and resigned the Lord-Lieutenancy. The Duke of Ormond was appointed in his stead, and Marlborough and Godolphin were rid of a troublesome colleague. But though Rochester lost his share in the Government, some of his friends still held high office, and were an endless cause of trouble. The Duchess of Marlborough continued to urge her husband to incline more to the Whigs, who would be much more likely than the Tories to support the war with zeal. She was in continual intercourse with the Whigs by means of one of their leaders, the Earl of Sunderland, who had married her second daughter, Lady Anne Churchill, in 1700. He was the son of that Earl of Sunderland whose cleverness and unscrupulousness had enabled him to play such an important part in the reigns of Charles II. and James II. He was an advanced

Whig, a man of decided ability, and an eloquent speaker, but wanting in prudence and tact. His free and violent way of expressing his opinions made him especially disagreeable to those who differed from him, and he was not a likely man to conciliate Marlborough with the Whigs. Marlborough himself would have preferred to rule independently of party. "I hope," he writes to his wife, "I shall always continue in the humour I am now in; that is, to be governed by neither party; but to do what I think is best for England, by which I shall disoblige both parties."

Some Whigs still took part in the Government, and were members of the Privy Council. The Earl of Nottingham, Secretary of State, who was a firm friend of Rochester's, and a violent Tory, had opposed as far as he could the policy of Godolphin and Marlborough. He knew that the Queen esteemed him highly, and counting on her favour, declared that he could no longer remain in office unless all the Whigs were excluded from the Government. He hoped in this way to humble his rivals. But the Queen remained true to her ministers, and refused to do as he wished. Nottingham resigned, and his place was filled by Harley, the Speaker of the Commons. He was a personal friend of Marlborough's, whose political views he shared, and who valued him on account of his industry and financial talents. Harley was a man determined to get on; by his plausible ways he managed to keep on good terms with both Whigs

and Tories, Churchmen and Dissenters. He meant to stick to Marlborough as long as he could hope to gain anything from him, and succeeded in inspiring the Duke with complete confidence. A friend of Harley's, and a man of far more brilliant talent, Henry St. John, was about the same time made Secretary of War. He had won the Duke's favour by professing the warmest attachment to him; but the Duchess regarded both these statesmen with suspicion, and blamed the Duke for not having promoted some of her friends the Whigs.

CHAPTER VII.

Blenheim.

THE campaign of 1703 had been, on the whole, a successful one for Lewis XIV., and had given him hope that he might be able utterly to crush the Allies. All through the winter he was busy in preparations for the next campaign, and in the spring was able to put eight splendid armies on foot. The rebels in the Cevennes were becoming formidable, and an army under Villars was sent against them. A fine army was sent to Spain, under the Duke of Berwick, a natural son of James II. by Marlborough's sister, Arabella Churchill, and one of the ablest generals in the French service. But the great effort was to be made in Germany, where Lewis XIV. hoped to carry out the plan which had been made for the year before. The road to the Austrian frontier lay open to the French army, as the Elector of Bavaria had his camp at Ulm; when once Marshal Tallard had joined him, they would be able to lead their armies to the very walls of Vienna. Austria was already much harassed by the Hungarian

rebels, with whom the Elector of Bavaria was in communication. Lewis XIV. hoped to force her to conclude a separate peace with him, and then he would only have England and Holland against him. The only general who was likely to be able to offer any opposition to Tallard was the Margrave Lewis of Baden, who commanded in Alsace; so Tallard, after leading some troops to join the Elector at Ulm, hastened back to oppose the Margrave in Alsace.

But Marlborough had long ago seen what were the plans of the French, and he felt that if they were allowed to succeed the Allies would be hopelessly ruined. He knew that there was only one man who could see the whole bearing of the state of things as he did, and to Prince Eugene he communicated his fears and his plans. They agreed together to lead their armies into Bavaria, and there combine to fight the French on their way to Vienna. A glance at the map will show the boldness of Marlborough's plan. In those days, when there were no railways, and roads were bad, to lead an army by rapid marches all the way from Holland to Bavaria, where, if defeated, it would be in the midst of a hostile country, was an undertaking of perilous difficulty; but, on the other hand, it was the only hope of saving the Grand Alliance, and Marlborough was not a man to shrink from difficulties. He doubtless dreaded less the difficulties of the march and the campaign than all the tiresome proceedings which would be

necessary before he could get permission to lead his troops away from the Netherlands. He knew that it would be useless to tell his real object to the Tories at home, who already thought the English operations too extensive, or to the Dutch, who trembled for the safety of their frontier, even if he suggested a bold plan of operations in the Netherlands. He therefore kept his real object entirely secret, and did not even confide it entirely to the Queen and Godolphin. Prince Eugene, at Marlborough's suggestion, made the Emperor write a pressing request to Anne for aid in his great danger, and in consequence Marlborough obtained a permission from the Cabinet to go to Holland, and take such steps, in concert with the Dutch, as should seem best for aiding the Emperor.

His plan was to profess to intend a campaign on the Moselle, and when he had once got his troops there to lead them on into Bavaria. He managed this difficult matter with his usual ability. His perfect command of temper enabled him to be calm and bland under the most provoking circumstances, and to combat with unwearying patience the objections raised to his plans. On this occasion he showed great firmness, and made the Dutch understand that he meant to lead his own troops to the Moselle, and that they would consult their own safety best by co-operating with him. At last, on the 4th May, he got from the Dutch powers to carry out his schemes. About the same time, too, he was relieved from another

trouble, which had weighed heavily on his spirits. He had left England after a dispute with the Duchess, and had not managed to make peace before starting; she even sent an angry letter after him. Marlborough could not be happy for a moment when she was angry, and we can see how he must have suffered by his joy when she at last relented, and wrote him an affectionate letter, offering even to accompany him on the campaign. "I would not for anything in my power," he writes, "your letter had been lost; for it is so very kind that I would in return lose a thousand lives, if I had them, to make you happy. Before I sat down to write this letter I took yours that you wrote at Harwich out of my strong box and have burnt it, and if you will give me leave it will be a great pleasure to me to have it in my power to read this dear, dear letter often, and that it may be found in my strong box when I am dead. I do this minute love you better than ever I did before. This letter of yours has made me so happy that I do from my soul wish we could retire and not be blamed. What you say as to coming over I should be extremely pleased with; for your dear letter has so transported me that I think you would be happier in being here than where you are. . . . But you will see by my last letter as well as this that what you desire is impossible . . . . but love me as you now do and no hurt can come to me. You have by this kindness preserved my quiet and, I believe, my life; for till I had this letter I

have been very indifferent of what should become of myself. I have pressed this business of carrying an army into Germany in order to leave a good name behind me, wishing for nothing else but good success. I shall now add that of having a long life, that I may be happy with you."

The army which Marlborough hoped to lead into Bavaria was to consist of about forty thousand men in all. Of these a great many were English, some were Dutch, and others were troops in the pay of England and Holland, supplied by the different German States which had joined the Grand Alliance. These German troops were stationed at different places along the Rhine, and were to join the main army on its march. Overkirk was left in Holland with the greater part of the Dutch troops to defend the frontier.

Marlborough started from Maestricht and begun his march on the 19th May, and on the 25th reached Coblentz. Everywhere he was received with marks of the greatest distinction, and says in his letters to his wife that he was ashamed even to repeat the flattery which was heaped upon him. Maintz was reached on the 29th, and the troops were reviewed by the Elector, who was much struck by their cleanly and neat appearance. "These gentlemen," he said, speaking of the officers, "seem to be all dressed for the ball." Here Marlborough received the provoking news that the Margrave of Baden had allowed some bodies of French troops to join the camp of the

Elector of Bavaria at Ulm. The Margrave was a slow and punctilious general, and though he saw what ought to be done, was not active enough to do it, and so missed the important moment.

The French meanwhile watched Marlborough's movements with wonder and alarm. At first they thought that his destination was the Moselle, then that he meant to act in Alsace. Marshal Villeroi had followed him from the Meuse, and now sent for more troops from Flanders, and hoped to effect a junction with Tallard, so as to protect Alsace. Of Marlborough's real intention no one had the least suspicion; his troops were in excellent spirits; "Notwithstanding the continual marching," he writes, "the men are extremely pleased with this expedition." His object could not much longer remain a secret. On the 9th June he reached Mondelsheim, on the Neckar, and was there joined by Prince Eugene. This was the first meeting of the two generals, and personal intercourse increased the confidence which they felt in one another. Marlborough reviewed his troops in the presence of Eugene, who complimented him much upon their excellent condition and the fine spirit they showed. "Money," he said, "of which you have no want in England, can buy clothes and accoutrements, but nothing can buy the spirit which I see in the looks of your men; it is an earnest of victory." The two generals were soon joined by the Margrave of Baden, that the three might together decide upon the future operations of the

campaign. Marlborough and Eugene wished to act together upon the Danube, and leave the Margrave on the Rhine. But the Margrave wanted to be where most laurels could be won, and asserted his right as elder in rank to have the choice before Eugene. Neither would he allow to Marlborough the command in chief, but insisted that they should command on alternate days. Marlborough foresaw many difficulties from this arrangement. "Prince Eugene," he wrote, "has been very free with me in giving me the character of the Prince of Baden, by which I find I must be much more on my guard than if I was to act with Prince Eugene."

On the 14th the generals separated, Eugene to go to the Rhine, and the Margrave to bring his troops to join Marlborough's army. From Holland meanwhile came anxious news. Overkirk, through the difficulties thrown in his way by the timidity of the Deputies, had missed an opportunity for striking a decisive blow. The Dutch were alarmed at the report that Villeroi was returning, and terrified at the thought that Marlborough was going so far from them, begged him to send back some of the auxiliary forces. Marlborough's calm spirit was unmoved by these difficulties; he pacified the fears of the Dutch by ordering boats to be in readiness on the Rhine to convey some of his troops back to the Meuse if necessary, and having at last heard that the Margrave's troops were in motion, proceeded to cross the mountainous

defile of Geislingen, which led into the plains of the Danube. On the 22nd June he set up his camp at Urspring, just at the opening of the plains of the Danube, whilst the Margrave was at Westerstellen, near by.

The Elector of Bavaria had moved his camp from Ulm to the neighbourhood of Dillengen. Marlborough's object was to reduce Bavaria before the Elector could receive reinforcements from France; and Eugene had promised to suffer the last extremity before he would let a French army cross the Rhine. But Marlborough did not intend to begin by attacking the Elector's camp; he wished first to secure Donauwerth, which would be a useful place for making a magazine and collecting stores, as it was easy of access from the friendly district of Franconia. The Elector had thought to make Donauwerth quite safe by stationing twelve thousand five hundred men on the Schellenberg, a fortified height overhanging Donauwerth. Marlborough determined at once to attack the Schellenberg. With his usual care for his soldiers, he first established a hospital for the wounded at Nordlingen, and then pressed on to the Schellenberg, having with some difficulty persuaded the Margrave to agree to his vigorous movements.

On the 2nd of July it was Marlborough's turn to command, and his army started at five in the morning on their march to the Schellenberg. Marlborough himself, who had hurried on with a

first detachment of troops, came in sight of the Schellenberg at nine o'clock, and began to reconnoitre the position. By midday the main body of the army had come up. Marlborough was determined not to miss the chance of making the attack on the day when he had the command. After a short rest the troops were ordered to advance; but there was still a stream to be crossed, and it was six o'clock in the evening before he could order the attack. The troops advanced firmly, but were met by a terrible fire; many brave officers fell, and there was a moment's pause. Soon order was restored, and they pressed on again. Once more they gave way under the fire, and the enemy rushed out upon them, but were driven back by the English guards, who firmly stood their ground. Again the English pressed on, though their ranks grew thin under the heavy fire, and they hesitated till General Lumley gallantly brought up the horse and gave them new courage. The enemy, too, had suffered severely, and were beginning to lose heart; just as the English and Dutch were about to break through the entrenchment, the Margrave himself led up the Imperialist troops, who, having arrived later, had not yet joined in the attack. This raised the spirit of the Allies, and completed the confusion of the enemy. One more effort and the French and Bavarians were flying in disorder from their entrenchments. Marlborough ordered his horse to charge the fugitives, and there was a terrible carnage. Some fled to Donauwerth, and were cut down on the way;

others tried to escape by the bridge that led over the Danube, but broke it down by their weight, and were lost in the river. Only three thousand ever got back to the Elector, and all their baggage fell into the hands of the Allies. The loss was heavy on both sides; the Allies had fifteen hundred killed and four thousand wounded, and many officers were slain. Night set in with a terrible rain, and Marlborough busied himself with doing all that he could for the wounded.

This victory did not lead to any better understanding between Marlborough and the Margrave, and Marlborough's letters are full of complaints of the difficulties thrown in his way by the jealous temper and slow disposition of the Margrave. After the defeat on the Schellenberg the Elector withdrew the garrison from Donauwerth, and retired to Augsburg; and the Allies thus gained peaceable possession of Donauwerth. Marlborough then led his army across the Danube and the Leck into the fertile plains of Bavaria. The Elector was so disheartened by the defeat on the Schellenberg, which had destroyed some of his finest regiments, that there were hopes that he might be persuaded to make a separate peace with the Allies; but the promise of succour from the French revived his spirits, and the negotiation came to nothing. Marlborough determined therefore to punish the subjects for the sins of their ruler, and to lay waste Bavaria as far as Munich. But though in this act of destruction he followed the

cruel example which Turenne had set in the Palatinate, he at least grieved for the suffering which he considered himself forced to cause. He writes to his wife: "We are in the Elector's country, and he will find it difficult to persuade us to quit it. We sent this morning three thousand horse to his chief city of Munich, with orders to burn and destroy all the country about it. This is so contrary to my nature that nothing but absolute necessity could have obliged me to consent to it; for these poor people suffer for their master's ambition. There having been no war in this country for above sixty years, these towns and villages are so clean that you would be pleased with them."

Meanwhile Marshal Tallard had been marching from the Rhine to Bavaria, and fording the Danube at Mosskirk, had effected a junction with the troops of the Elector at Augsburg. Prince Eugene had marched from the Rhine in a parallel line with Tallard, and reached Hochstadt about the same time as Tallard joined the Elector. It became absolutely necessary for the armies of Eugene and Marlborough to combine; for each was separately much weaker than the united French and Bavarian army. But there were great difficulties in the way of effecting a junction. If Eugene marched to join Marlborough and the Margrave in Bavaria, he would make it easy for the enemy to cross the Danube and interrupt the communications of the Allies with Franconia, and then they would be cut off from their supplies; if Marlborough and

the Margrave marched to join Eugene they would lose their command of Bavaria. It was an anxious crisis. Marlborough knew that failure now meant ruin to himself as well as to the cause of the Allies; for he had undertaken the whole expedition almost on his own authority, and there were plenty who would be only too glad to condemn him if it failed.

Eugene himself came to consult with them what was to be done, and they met at Schrobenhausen. There they decided that it would be impossible for them to keep their footing in Bavaria without the possession of the fortress of Ingolstadt. The Margrave was easily persuaded to besiege it, as he was told that great glory would attach to its reduction, for it boasted itself of being a virgin fortress which had never yielded to any foe. Marlborough was to lead his troops to join those of Prince Eugene, and the two generals, free from their troublesome colleague, hoped to be able to act with vigour and decision. When the Margrave had started for Ingolstadt, Eugene hastened back to his army, and Marlborough started on his march towards the plains of Hochstadt. His movements were hastened by hearing that the enemy were advancing with the obvious intention of attacking Eugene's army before it could be reinforced. Eugene sent urgent messages, begging Marlborough to make haste. The march was difficult; for there were several rivers besides the Danube to be crossed, and all had been swollen

by heavy rains. On the 11th July the first part of the English troops joined those of Eugene, and the main army came up on the 12th, having marched twenty-four hours the day before.

Marlborough and Eugene mounted the tower of Dapfheim Church to survey the country, and discovered the enemy engaged in marking out a camp on the other side of the little river Nebel, between Blenheim and Lutzingen. The sight filled them with joy; they hoped to have a favourable opportunity of attacking whilst the enemy were still disordered by the confusion of settling in a new camp. When it was known that the generals meant to fight, several of the officers remonstrated with Marlborough on the rashness of the step; for the forces of the enemy were superior, as they numbered sixty thousand men, whilst the Allies only had fifty-two thousand, and the enemy were in a strong position. But Marlborough paid no heed; he knew that every hour gave the enemy opportunities to strengthen their position, whilst Villeroi was advancing to cut off the communication of the Allies with Franconia. The orders to prepare for a battle on the morrow were received by the troops with enthusiasm.

On the night of the 12th the army of the Allies was encamped on the banks of the Kessel, a little river flowing into the Danube from the north. On the other side of the Kessel lies a small plain about seven miles long, and in no place more than three miles wide. This plain is bounded on the

south by the Danube, there about three hundred feet wide, with banks either steep or swampy, and no fords. To the north of the plain the ground rises irregularly in a series of wooded hills, from which many small streams flow into the Danube. In about the middle of the plain the Nebel flows into the Danube, and just where it joins that river on its western bank is the village of Blenheim; a little above Blenheim, on the Nebel, are two water-mills, and still farther, about two miles from Blenheim, is the village of Oberglau, and then, half a mile further on, the village of Unterglau. The banks of the Nebel, along its whole course, are swampy, and sometimes, especially between Oberglau and Blenheim, surrounded by so much morass as to be impassable. The French and Bavarians were encamped on the west side of Nebel, where the ground rises slightly, their lines stretching from Blenheim, where Marshal Tallard had his head-quarters, to Lutzingen, near the sources of the Nebel, where the Elector and the French General Marsin were quartered.

Before sunrise on the morning of the 13th August the Allies were in motion, and by three o'clock had crossed the Kessel. Marlborough and Eugene rode forward to observe the enemy, and make their plans. Eugene was to lead his army to the right, where he would be confronted by the Elector and Marsin, whilst Marlborough was to lead his troops across the Nebel near the water-mills, where the passage seemed easiest,

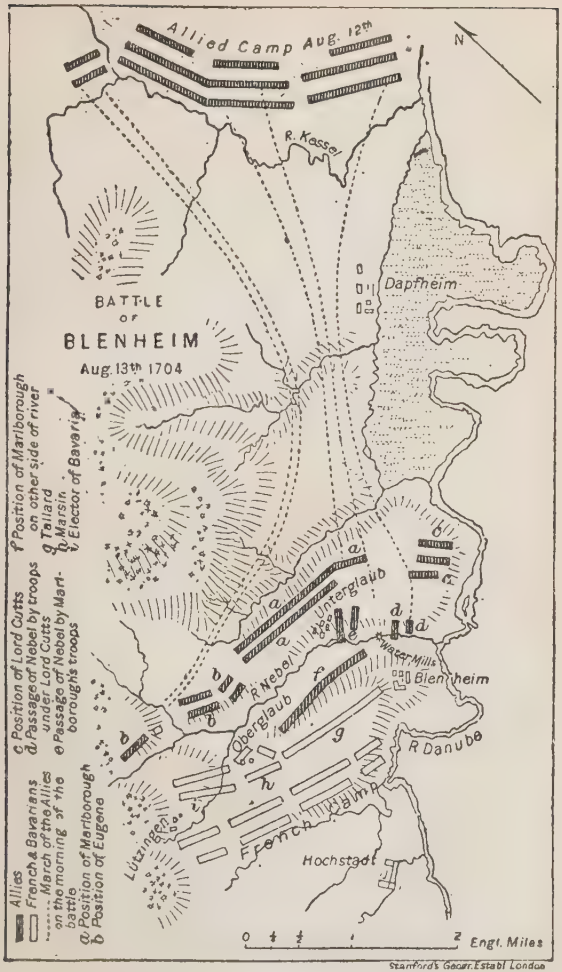
and, forming on the other side, attack the French troops under Tallard.

The morning was hazy, and the enemy had no idea that the Allies were approaching. Tallard was convinced that they did not mean to give battle, but to retreat on Nordlingen. At seven, as the fog cleared off, their columns were seen advancing, and there could no longer be any doubt that they meant to fight. Tallard hastened to make his preparations. He thought that Blenheim was the key of the position, and he threw a large number of troops into it, and strengthened it with barricades of waggons, boards, and gates. This was his great mistake, for he put so many troops into Blenheim that they were not able to move freely, and their loss unnecessarily weakened his line. His artillery was well posted on the surrounding heights; Marlborough too had commanding batteries on the heights below Oberglau on the other side of the Nebel.

Marlborough's troops were in position at about eight o'clock, but he was not to begin the attack till Eugene was ready, and Eugene's troops had a long and difficult march over rough and broken country, dragging their artillery with terrible toil. Meanwhile prayers were offered up by the chaplains in each regiment of the English. Marlborough, after pointing out to the surgeons the best positions to take up, rode along the front of his troops, and was delighted to see the excellent spirits of his men. A brisk cannonading was kept up

between the batteries. At twelve o'clock the message expected with such impatience at last arrived, and they learnt that Prince Eugene was ready. Lord Cutts, one of the bravest officers in the English army, was immediately ordered to begin the attack on Blenheim. The water-mills were taken, and the Allies crossed the Nebel amidst a terrible fire. It soon became clear that Blenheim was too strong to be taken. Marlborough ordered Lord Cutts to keep up a feigned attack sufficient to occupy the troops in Blenheim, whilst a great effort was made on the centre of Tallard's lines.

Near Unterglau General Churchill, Marlborough's brother, had already forced a passage for some of the troops. There was much difficulty in getting across the Nebel; and if Tallard had attacked the cavalry whilst they were struggling in the marshy ground, he might have scattered them in confusion. But he allowed the opportunity to pass, and they were able to form on the other side of the Nebel. About one o'clock Eugene had led his troops across the Nebel to the attack; but the Imperial cavalry on that day did not fight well. Three times they were driven back across the Nebel. Eugene himself fought with desperate valour, and exposed his person most recklessly, but it was in vain. At last, in despair, he turned to the infantry, which was composed of Prussian troops, and had shown great resolution. Inspired by his courage they drove the enemy through the wood


Allied Camp Aug. 12th
N
R. Kessel
Dapfheim
BATTLE
OF
BLENHEIM
Aug. 13th 1704
f Position of Marlborough on other side of river
g Tallard
h Marsin
i Elector of Bavaria
c Position of Lord Cutts
d Passage of Nebel by troops under Lord Cutts
e Passage of Nebel by Marlborough's troops
Unterglaub
Oberglaub
R. Nebel
Water Mills
Blenheim
R Danube
French Camp
Lutzingen
Hochstadt
a Position of Marlborough
b Position of Eugene
Allies
French & Bavarians
March of the Allies on the morning of the battle
0 1/4 1/2 1 2 Engl. Miles
Stanford's Geogr. Estabt London

beyond Lutzingen, but were even then unsupported by the cavalry; and their advanced position might have placed them in great danger, had it not been that meanwhile the event of the battle was being decided in another quarter.

Marlborough's cavalry, after the passage of the Nebel, had formed in two strong lines fronting the enemy. They charged amidst a terrible fire, and at the second charge broke the enemy's line, and an open space was left in the centre. Tallard saw that the day was lost, but he hoped still to save his army. Whilst he paused, hoping for support from the Elector or Marsin, Marlborough bade the trumpet sound for the charge. The French cavalry did not await it; they fired their carbines, turned and fled, some to the left towards Hochstadt, some to the right towards Sonderheim. The Allies followed, and the slaughter was great. Many were cut down and taken prisoners, others madly plunged into the Danube and were drowned. Tallard himself was captured. In Blenheim eleven thousand men still remained. They made a desperate attempt to resist; but they were so hemmed in that both resistance and escape were impossible, and they were obliged to surrender unconditionally.

The army of the Elector and Marsin did not suffer so severely. They were able to retreat in good order; for Eugene's troops were too exhausted to pursue them, and Marlborough did not venture to do so, since in the obscurity caused by the

darkening night, and the thick masses of smoke, it was easy to mistake Eugene's forces for the enemy. The French and Bavarians had lost twenty-eight thousand in killed and wounded, besides twelve thousand prisoners, whilst the losses of the Allies were twelve thousand killed and wounded.

As soon as Marlborough was certain of the fate of the battle, he tore a leaf from his pocket-book, and wrote a hasty pencil note to the Duchess:

"I have not time to say more, but to beg you will give my duty to the Queen, and let her know her army has had a glorious victory. M. Tallard and two other generals are in my coach, and I am following the rest. The bearer, my aide-de-camp (Colonel Parke) will give her an account of what has passed. I shall do it in a day or two by another more at large.—MARLBOROUGH."

Marlborough had been seventeen hours on horseback, and was glad when the battle was over to seek a little rest in a water-mill near Hochstadt. The next morning he and Eugene entered Hochstadt, and then visited Marshal Tallard and the chief French prisoners.

Between Marlborough and Eugene there was no jealousy about the honours gained by the victory. Eugene gladly gave to Marlborough the first place, whilst Marlborough repeatedly stated that Eugene had only been prevented from playing a more distinguished part by bad luck, by the difficulties of his position, and the inferiority of the Imperial cavalry. "Had the success of Prince Eugene,"

he wrote to the Duchess, "been equal to his merit, we should in that day's action have made an end of the war." Marlborough only reserved Marshal Tallard and one or two of the most distinguished prisoners for the Queen, and caused the others to be equally divided between himself and Eugene, as if their share in gaining the victory had been equal.

In England the whole country broke out into rejoicing at the wonderful victory. Anne went in state to give thanks at St. Paul, and the people were eager to do anything which might show their joy and their devotion to their great general. The most important result of the victory was, that it broke the force of the spell which had surrounded the great power of France. Lewis XIV. had gloried in calling himself the Invincible; his armies had never suffered any important defeat, his soldiers had fought with the confidence that repeated victories had given, whilst his enemies had fought against him almost with the feeling that it was vain to hope for success. Now the finest French regiments had been destroyed in one battle. For the moment the French lost their confidence, and the name of Marlborough became a terror to them, whilst on all sides the enemies of France took heart. Marlborough was looked upon almost as if he had the fate of Europe in his hand. From Rome Lord Shrewsbury wrote to him: "I must tell you that in this holy, ignorant city they have an idea of you as of a Tamerlane, and had I a

picture of old Colonel Birch, with his whiskers, I could put it off for yours, and change it for one done by Raphael."

The Emperor, usually cold and indifferent, was roused to congratulate Marlborough in the warmest terms. He was anxious to make him a Prince of the Empire, and Anne was very willing that he should receive this honour; but Marlborough preferred to wait till the Emperor had some principality which he could give him, rather than receive an empty title.

Numbers of poems appeared in honour of this victory; but neither Godolphin nor Marlborough were men of literary tastes, and they had never exerted themselves to show protection and favour to any of the rising poets or pamphleteers. These poems were so bad, that even Godolphin was disgusted with their badness. He was determined that something better should be written, and consulted Halifax, a leading Whig, and a well-known friend of literature, on the subject. After some pressing, Halifax at last recommended Addison, who was at that time living in comparative obscurity and poverty. He had first become known by his Latin poems, and had attached himself to Halifax and the Whigs. The accession of Anne had disappointed his hopes of advancement through the Whigs, who were wont to reward writers who favoured their party by some small post under government. Now Addison in his humble lodging was surprised by a visit

from Boyle, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in person; for Halifax had insisted that his friend the poet should be treated with due distinction. He gladly consented to write a poem in honour of the battle of Blenheim, which might well be looked upon as a great Whig triumph. When his poem, *The Campaign*, came out, it was hailed with delight, and pleased Godolphin so much, that he gave Addison a Commissionership worth £200 a year. The poem is stately and melodious, and contains some very fine lines, especially those which describe Marlborough on the battle-field:

> "'Twas then great Marlbro's mighty soul was proved,
> That in the shock of charging hosts unmoved,
> Amidst confusion, horror, and despair,
> Examined all the dreadful scenes of war.
> In peaceful thought the field of death surveyed,
> To fainting squadrons sent the timely aid;
> Inspired repulsed battalions to engage,
> And taught the doubtful battle where to rage.
> So when an angel by divine command,
> With rising tempests shakes a guilty land,
> Such as of late o'er pale Britannia passed,
> Calm and serene he drives the furious blast;
> And pleased the Almighty's orders to perform,
> Rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm."

CHAPTER VIII.

Campaign of 1705.

EVEN after the battle of Blenheim the Elector of Bavaria refused to desert the French cause, and left his country with the remains of the French army. The Electress remained behind, and was forced to make terms with the Allies. Marlborough tried to get moderate terms for her; but she had to surrender all the fortresses, and the country was put under Austrian administration.

Marlborough and Eugene were joined by the Margrave of Baden, indignant that such glory had been gained whilst he was away. The Allies then marched in detachments to the Rhine, whither the French had retreated. After meeting together at Philipsburg, they made arrangements for besieging Landau. The French army, now commanded by Villeroi, was too dispirited to offer them any resistance, and fell back even from the most advantageous positions as they approached, so that they were able completely to invest Landau.

Joseph, the young King of the Romans, who was full of the warmest admiration for Marlborough, and eager to serve with so famous a general, arrived at the camp before Landau, and took the nominal command. The garrison of Landau was full of courage, and determined to resist. It was the third siege which the unfortunate city had to sustain within three years. Marlborough having seen everything well arranged, determined not to be idle during the time of the siege; and, leaving the Margrave in command, marched to reduce some of the strong places on the Moselle. In England many objections were made to this continuation of the campaign, as Marlborough was much wanted at home. But Marlborough wished to prepare for the campaign of the following year, when he hoped to carry the war into France. He was successful in taking both Treves and Traerbach by the middle of November.

Whilst suffering in health from the fatigues of the battle of Blenheim and harassed with the difficulties of troublesome marches and sieges in the Palatinate, he was still further perplexed by demands from all sides for his advice and direction in matters of English politics and in the affairs of the Grand Alliance. There were some amongst the Tories who were by no means pleased with the victory of Blenheim. They disliked the war, disapproved of the large scale on which it was conducted, and were disgusted at a victory

which tended to make it more popular. They declared that the battle had been a needless waste of men, and would do little really to abase Lewis XIV., who could easily raise new armies. The Duchess in her letters kept back none of the vexatious things which were said against the war or against the Duke. She had no notion of keeping her husband's mind at ease and saving him from anxieties; her hope always was to disgust him with the Tories, and bring him over entirely to her friends the Whigs. Godolphin too wrote to him for advice in all matters; and Marlborough's disgust with party factions increased. "I do assure you," he wrote to the Duchess, "as for myself, my pretending to be of no party is not designed to get favour, or to deceive anybody, for I am very little concerned what any party thinks of me. I know them both so well that if my quiet depended upon either of them I should be most miserable." And again: "While I live I will meddle with no business but what belongs to the army, and from henceforward shall never more use the expression of being of no party, but shall certainly not care what any party thinks of me."

He was much troubled by the state of affairs in Spain, where the Duke of Schomberg, far from showing himself equal to his famous father, had effected nothing, and had spent his time in quarrelling with the Dutch and Portuguese commanders; so that the Duke of Berwick had been able to

carry on a successful war in Portugal. The only success in that quarter had been the surprise on the 4th August by the English fleet, under the Prince of Hesse-Darmstadt and Sir George Rooke, of the Rock of Gibraltar, which since then has always remained in the English possession. Its importance was hardly realized at that time, and it was little thought that this small spot would be the one permanent acquisition gained by England from a war distinguished by such victories as that of Blenheim. Gibraltar gives England the command of the Mediterranean sea. The Spaniards repeatedly tried to get it back, but the English people clung to it; first, because they considered it due to the national honour to keep this prize, the sole thing that remained to recall a long and victorious war; afterwards, because its position made it important for the security of the road to India.

From Italy, too, the news was bad. The small army of Victor Amadeus was completely hemmed in by the French, under Vendome, one of Lewis XIV.'s most able generals, and there were fears lest he should not be able to defend his capital. He sent urgent messages to Marlborough for help, which were echoed by the Emperor Leopold, who was most anxious to drive the French from Italy. Marlborough felt that help must be sent to Victor Amadeus, and determined to try and persuade the King of Prussia to allow eight thousand of his soldiers to go to Italy in the pay of the English.

For this purpose, having settled his troops in winter quarters on the Moselle, he undertook a fatiguing journey to Berlin at the very worst time of the year. He knew that only by flattering the King of Prussia's vanity could he hope to get anything out of him, and he could do this best by word of mouth. During his journey he heard at last of the fall of Landau, which he had expected most impatiently. He reached Berlin on the 22nd of November after a most troublesome journey, during which, owing to the badness of the roads, he was obliged to travel for fourteen or fifteen hours a day. At Berlin his persuasive words were entirely successful. "I am very well contented," he writes, "at the pains I have taken in coming here. . . . It is not to be expressed the civilities and honours they have done me here." It was not long before the eight thousand men were on their way to the relief of the Duke of Savoy.

Marlborough travelled home by way of the Hague, and at last reached England on the 14th December, bringing with him Marshal Tallard and his most distinguished prisoners, and the chief standards which he had taken from the French. He was greeted with the greatest rapture by all classes. On the next day he took his seat in the House of Lords, and received a warm address of congratulation. On the 3rd of January there was a solemn procession of the trophies of war from the Tower to Westminster Hall.

First came companies of the horse and foot

guards, together with many distinguished persons, and then a hundred and twenty-eight pikemen, each carrying a captured standard. The procession passed through the streets amidst the exulting shouts of the people, who were ready to laud Marlborough to the skies.

On the 6th the Lord Mayor and Town Council gave a magnificent banquet to Marlborough in the Goldsmiths' Hall. He went there in one of the royal carriages, accompanied by Godolphin, the Duke of Somerset, and the Prince of Hesse-Darmstadt, and followed by a long cavalcade of carriages. At Temple Bar he was received in state by the city marshals; crowds thronged every street, filled the windows, and covered the house-tops as he passed, that they might catch a glimpse of his face.

The Commons of their own accord presented an address to the Queen, begging her to suggest some fit means for perpetuating the memory of the great services of the Duke of Marlborough. Anne joyfully agreed, and proposed to convey to the Duke and his heirs the royal manor of Woodstock. A bill for the purpose passed without opposition; and Anne, not satisfied with this reward, joined to the grant an order to the Board of Works to build, at the royal expense, a splendid palace in the park at Woodstock, which was to be called Blenheim Palace, and be a perpetual memorial of the victory. The architect chosen for this great building was Sir John Vanbrugh, who

was looked upon as one of the first architects of the day; the Queen approved his model, which she kept in the palace at Kensington, and the works were begun at once.

In the campaign of 1705, Marlborough hoped to reap the effect of his successes in 1704. He intended to invade France from the Moselle, where in Treves and Traerbach he had capital magazines for ammunition and stores. It was the most vulnerable side of France, and he hoped to have a successful campaign in Lorraine, where he believed that the people would welcome him with open arms; for they inclined much more to the rule of the Empire than to that of France.

Marlborough went to the Hague in April, and, after discussions which lasted three weeks, got the consent of the States to his projected campaign. He reached Coblentz by the 17th May, and was disgusted by the backward condition of the preparations. The Margrave of Baden was slow as usual, and complained that a wound which he had got at the Schellenberg made it impossible for him to move from his palace at Rastadt. Marlborough made a journey thither himself to try and put his troublesome colleague into a good temper. He flattered him in every possible way—praised his formal buildings and trim gardens at Rastadt, and the Margrave promised to join him, but said that he could only bring a much smaller number of troops than had at first been expected. Neither did the Court at Vienna fulfil its promises. The

Emperor was growing old; all his ministers were old too, and unfit to pursue a vigorous policy. The German States were equally slow, and Marlborough could get neither the troops nor the artillery which had been promised him. The Margrave, instead of joining the army, turned aside to drink the waters at Schlangenbad, and Marlborough met with nothing but vexations and disappointments. The death of the Emperor Leopold, and the accession of his son Joseph, led him to hope for better things; but nothing could make the Viennese administration more vigorous.

Lewis XIV., on the other hand, instead of being cast down by the severe reverses of the last campaign, had busied himself with new zeal in preparations to meet his enemies. His hands were now free at home. Villars had brought to an end the war with the Huguenots in the Cevennes, by granting them very moderate terms. Their leader, Jean Cavalier, took service with the English in Spain, where he commanded a regiment of his fellow-exiles. Villars, having finished his work in the Cevennes, was sent with a large army against the Allies on the Moselle; but he had strict orders not to venture a battle, as a defeat there would leave France exposed to an invasion. Marlborough tried in vain to make him fight, but Villars entrenched himself in a strong position, and persisted in remaining on the defensive. Marlborough's impatience at the dilatory conduct of the Allies, which took away all hopes of a successful cam-

paign, increased daily. Writing to Godolphin, he says: "I have for these last ten days been so troubled by the many disappointments I have had, that I think if it were possible to vex me so for a fortnight longer it would make an end of me. In short, I am weary of my life."

In the middle of June anxious news came from Holland. Villeroi and the Elector of Bavaria, who commanded the French forces there, had made a dash upon the Meuse, retaken Huy, and invested Liege. Overkirk, the Dutch general, was placed in a most dangerous position. Urgent messages were sent to Marlborough, begging him to send troops and, if possible, to come himself. He determined to do so at once, and started on the 17th June, having left sufficient troops to protect his conquests on the Moselle under D'Aubach, the Palatinate general. His approach caused Villeroi at once to withdraw from before Liege, and Marlborough and Overkirk effected their junction without difficulty. Huy, too, was soon recaptured; but Marlborough had the mortification of hearing that, scared by the approach of a small number of French troops, D'Aubach had retired from Treves and Saarbruch without a struggle, and both these places, with all their magazines, had fallen into the hands of the enemy.

Marlborough still hoped to do something in the Netherlands. After the fall of Huy he determined to break the lines by which the enemy had defended the frontier of Brabant. These lines extended

from Antwerp to Namur; they had taken three years to make, and the greatest possible skill had been employed in their construction. In great part they followed the course of the rivers, and every natural accident of the ground had been made use of to increase their strength. At the two ends were the fortresses of Antwerp and Namur, and between these many strongly-fortified posts; the whole lines were now protected by the presence of the French army under Villeroi, which was seventy thousand strong. Marlborough decided to force the lines at a point between Leeuwe and Heilisheim, which both nature and art had made so strong that it was less well guarded than the rest. He kept his design secret from every one except Overkirk; he was determined, he said, to cheat the Dutch into a victory. On the night of the 17th July the attempt was made, and was entirely successful. The enemy were completely taken by surprise, and the main body of the army had no idea what was being done until Marlborough had passed the lines. Villeroi was obliged to retire behind the Dyle to the neighbourhood of Louvain. Marlborough was anxious to press on after him, but the Dutch generals objected, and urged that the troops were too fatigued. Tirlemont, however, and several strong places on the line, surrendered to the Allies at the first summons.

This success caused the greatest exultation. But more than all other congratulations, Marl-

borough valued the devotion which was shown by the soldiers whom he commanded, and who for the most part had fought with him at Blenheim. "The kindness of the troops to me," he writes, "has transported me . . . and makes me resolved to endure anything for their sakes." Marlborough hoped that this success would encourage the Dutch, and make them less fearful of energetic measures. Unfortunately heavy rains set in for eight or nine days, and made further movements impossible. This gave time for the Dutch ardour to cool, and their generals grew more discontented than ever, especially Slangenberg, who cherished a strong dislike to Marlborough. At last Marlborough persuaded the Field Deputies to allow the army to cross the Dyle, so as to be in a position to attack the French. The passage of the river was begun successfully, the enemy were too distant to offer any opposition, when suddenly the Dutch generals began to hesitate. Slangenberg urged that the attempt was too dangerous, and in spite of all Marlborough's efforts, orders were sent to recall those troops who had already passed and to suspend the passage. Marlborough was bitterly disappointed, and had to suffer the further mortification that his opponents in England and Holland put down the failure to his own want of skill.

But disappointment never diminished his energy. Since the Dutch generals would not cross the Dyle, he determined to lead them round its sources, and thence attack the French army. The march was

successfully accomplished; the enemy, alarmed, moved their camp, so as to have the little river Ische in front of them. On August 18th the Allies were ready to attack the enemy's camp. Marlborough had carefully surveyed the ground both alone and with Overkirk, and they had made all their arrangements. At midday he begged the Deputies to give orders for the troops to advance. But they demurred, saying they must first consult with their generals. When they were all summoned, Marlborough, who was in a fever of impatience, but as usual outwardly calm, pressed upon them in strong terms the importance of an immediate advance. "I am convinced," he said, "that conscientiously and as men of honour we cannot now retire without an action. Should we neglect this opportunity, we must be responsible before God and man." His words were only received with a murmur of disapprobation. Slangenberg was foremost in expressing his opinion that the passage of the Ische was impracticable, and in spite of Marlborough's perfectly courteous replies, continued to mutter, "Murder and massacre." For three hours the discussion went on. Marlborough stood by in an agony of impatience, feeling that the precious moments were being lost. At last some of the Dutch generals went to reconnoitre the enemy's position. They declared it impossible to force their posts, and meanwhile night was falling. When Marlborough heard the result of their observations he exclaimed bitterly,

"I am at this moment ten years older than I was four days ago."

The next morning the attack was declared still more hopeless than before, for the enemy had made use of the night to strengthen their position. Marlborough could not stay where he was for want of bread, and was obliged to fall back. Through the obstinacy of the Dutch generals, he lost the opportunity of winning what he says would have been a greater victory than Blenheim. The battle, had he been allowed to fight, would have taken place on the field of Waterloo, made famous some hundred years later by another great English general. Marlborough had the still greater mortification of learning, from some deserters who were picked up, that had he advanced the French would not have resisted him, but would have fallen back on Brussels. The French generals were at a loss to understand his conduct, and began to believe that he could not be a great general after all, but that the victory of Blenheim must have been owing to some happy chance.

When the state of the case became known in England, a storm of indignation arose at the conduct of the Dutch generals and Deputies. Marlborough wrote a letter of complaint to the Hague, which he tried to make as temperate as possible, for he knew that any sign of dissension amongst the Allies would be most harmful to the common cause. When his letter was made public, the general voice of Holland was loud in his favour,

and the conduct of the Deputies was severely blamed. Heinsius, the Pensionary, a firm friend of Marlborough and of England, sturdily maintained Marlborough's cause, and the States sent a special envoy to make an apology to the English Cabinet.

Marlborough finished the campaign with the capture of Leeuwe, and superintended the demolition of that portion of the French lines which he had conquered. He was much troubled at this time by the affairs of the Grand Alliance. Every one wrote to him for help and advice, and his camp at Heerenthals was really the centre of European affairs. It is no wonder that the Grand Alliance produced great complications. The war had to be carried on in many different quarters, and the soldiers who fought were provided by many different nations, but were for the most part paid by England and Holland. All the smaller German States that had joined the Alliance furnished troops, for the pay of which they were not responsible. Yet all these varied elements had to be made to work together, and no one but Marlborough seemed able to keep things going. It was necessary to arrange where and under what generals the different bodies of troops were to fight, to settle who was to pay for them, to persuade the German States to be true to their promises, to stir up the Court at Vienna to greater activity, and to keep the touchy King of Prussia in a good temper.

In Spain the Allies had had a marked success. The Earl of Peterborough had been sent from England to make a descent upon Catalonia and Valencia. Peterborough was one of the most striking characters of the age. Without prudence, self-command, or patience, he possessed the courage of a knight-errant, and an activity of mind which made nothing so hateful, in his opinion, as idleness. He was famous for the rapidity with which he travelled over Europe. Swift said of him—

> "Knows every prince in Europe's face;
> Flies, like a squib, from place to place;
> And travels not, but runs a race."

Only a small force was now confided to him; but he was just the man to undertake what to others would seem desperate. The Archduke Charles accompanied him, and it was determined to attack Barcelona; but this was one of the best fortified cities in Spain, and its capture seemed hopeless. The attempt was given up, and the forces prepared to re-embark. But in the night Peterborough started, with only sixteen hundred men, to attack the fort of Montjuich, which overhung Barcelona. At the first attack part of the fort fell into his hands; in three days the whole fort was his, and shortly afterwards Barcelona itself capitulated. The result of this capture was that all Catalonia and Valencia declared for the Archduke, and the Allied army was largely increased by recruits, and by deserters from Philip's army.

In Italy things had not gone so well for the Allies. Eugene had been sent there, but was feebly supported. He fought a fierce battle at Cassano, in which both he and Vendome claimed the victory; but the situation of the Duke of Savoy was still full of danger. Moreover, the eight thousand Prussian troops had only been promised for a year, and the King of Prussia, who had taken offence at the Court of Vienna, threatened to recall them. Marlborough was entreated to go to Vienna to consult upon the steps to be taken for the relief of the Duke of Savoy, and to make another journey to Berlin to pacify the King. Convinced that his journey might be of great use to the cause of the Alliance, he got the necessary permission from England, and started on October 26 from Heerenthals for Vienna. His journey was like a triumphal progress; everywhere he was received with the greatest honour and distinction. At Vienna the Emperor treated him with the most marked favour. He created him a Prince of the Empire, and conferred upon him the Lordship of Mindelheim, in Swabia. Marlborough had hoped to meet Prince Eugene; but he was detained in Italy, and could only communicate his views by writing. In Vienna Marlborough showed once more his great diplomatic talents and his conciliatory powers. He pacified the jealousy which had arisen between Holland and Austria. He persuaded the Emperor to offer the King of Prussia such terms as would soothe his

pride, and to propose an honourable treaty to the Hungarian rebels. As there was a pressing need of supplies for the war in Italy, he guaranteed, in the name of his Government, a loan, which was to be at once raised in Vienna.

From Vienna he went to Berlin, and was again successful in humouring the fanciful pride of the King, who promised to allow his troops to remain in Italy "as a mark of respect to the Queen, and of particular friendship to the Duke." On his way back Marlborough visited Hanover, where he soothed some misunderstandings which had arisen between the Electoral Court and England. Before coming back to England he had to pause at the Hague to persuade the Dutch to agree to the arrangements which he had made at Vienna. There was a party in Holland in favour of an accommodation with France, and Lewis XIV. knew well how to attract the disaffected Dutch by offers of a separate peace. Marlborough had a firm friend in Heinsius, who exerted his utmost efforts to keep the Dutch true to their engagements. At last everything was finished, the necessary arrangements for the supply of troops for the next campaign were made, and Holland had agreed to furnish its share of the funds needed, so that early in January Marlborough was able to go back to England.

CHAPTER IX.

Ramillies.

BY the 25th April Marlborough was again at the Hague, where he was much annoyed at the backward state of the preparations for the next campaign. The Margrave of Baden, as usual, would not stir from his palace at Rastadt. The small remnant of the Imperial army in Italy had been entirely defeated before Eugene could get together the troops which he was to lead to their relief. In Spain the wonderful success of Lord Peterborough had led to new complications; he was more suited to cope with overwhelming difficulties than to command in times of prosperity. The Court of the Archduke Charles was distracted by quarrels, and every post brought complaints of Peterborough's overbearing temper. Lewis XIV. meanwhile had been as active as usual, and his armies were ready to take the field in every quarter. A large army of French and Spaniards under Philip V. was preparing to march against the Archduke Charles, whilst the Duke of Berwick kept the Portuguese at bay. Marlborough heard

nothing but dispiriting news. He had been so disgusted with the conduct of the Dutch Deputies and Generals in the last campaign, that he had made up his mind not to carry on the war in the Netherlands again, but to lead his army into Italy, where, together with Eugene, the one colleague whom he could entirely trust, he hoped to win a victory as great as Blenheim.

From Vienna, however, he was urgently begged to command on the Moselle. This was soon shown to be an impossibility, as the German Princes were not ready. Meanwhile his Italian plan grew still more hopeless; for the troops of the various Allies, especially the Danes and the Prussians, were so slow in arriving, that he had not enough troops whom he could command unconditionally. The Dutch were as timid as ever at the thought of any distant operations; and some successes of Villars over the Margrave of Baden on the Upper Rhine so terrified them, that they implored Marlborough to give up all thought of Italy, and stay to defend them. They promised, if he would do so, to free him from the control of the Field Deputies, either by allowing him to choose them himself, or by giving them secret orders to obey him in everything. Marlborough was obliged to yield, and with a heavy heart to give up his favourite plan of a campaign in Italy.

There seemed little prospect of doing anything in the Netherlands. The French were still securely

entrenched in their camp behind the Dyle, and Marlborough feared that this campaign would prove as ineffective as the last. But by a decided move he changed the face of affairs. He made preparations for the siege of Namur, and Villeroi received orders to risk a battle rather than let Namur fall into the hands of the English. He therefore left his camp, and marched upon Tirlemont. Marlborough sent pressing orders to collect his troops, and full of joy at the prospect of a battle, marched to meet the French. Villeroi was confident of victory. Judging by the events of the last campaign, he thought himself superior as a general to his opponent, and he had under him the King's household troops, who were renowned as the best soldiers in France. Early on the morning of the 23rd May he took up a strong position on Mont St. André, part of an elevated plain which forms the highest ground in Brabant. On it the Mehaign, the Dyle, and the Great and Little Gheet take their rise; and as they flow but sluggishly, they make the ground at their sources and along their banks marshy and wet. The plain is dotted with villages and small woods. Villeroi had posted almost his whole cavalry on his right, between the Mehaign and the village of Ramillies, in front of a mound known as the Tomb of Ottomond; his centre extended from Ramillies to Offuz, and his left from Offuz to Anderkirk, the whole presenting a concave shape.

Marlborough had intended to occupy the posi-

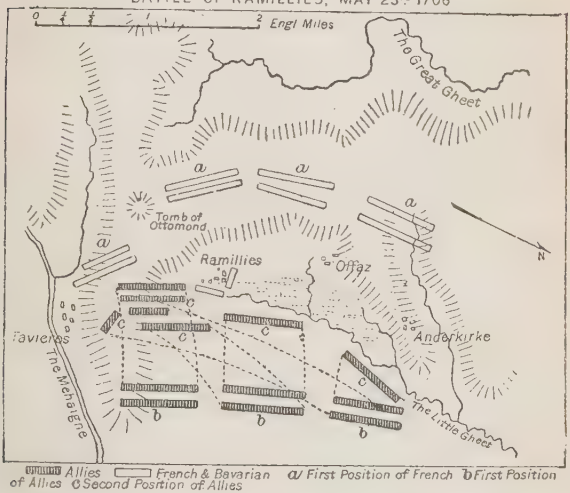
tion of Mont St. André himself; but only on the morning of the 23rd had he got all his troops together, and heavy rains during the night made it difficult for the infantry to get on quickly. He pushed on over the lines of the enemy which he had destroyed the year before. The morning was foggy, and it was nearly noon before the two armies, as the fog dispersed, came in sight of one another. They each numbered about sixty thousand men; and Marlborough, who was now free to act as he liked without asking permission of the Deputies, determined to attack at once. He saw in a moment the weakness of the enemy's position. Their lines extended in a concave shape, whilst he occupied the middle of the circle, and so could bring his troops to bear upon any point in the battle-field quicker than could his opponents. The key of the position was the Tomb of Ottomond. If he could take this, he would command the whole field. His plan, therefore, was to make a feigned attack on the enemy's left, so as to disconcert their arrangements, and draw off attention from the right. Then he would attack Tavières, and press on to the Tomb of Ottomond.

Orders were therefore given for the infantry which marched on Marlborough's right to advance against Anderkirk. Villeroi at once drew some of his infantry from the centre and marched to its relief. Meanwhile a vigorous attack was made on Tavières, and Villeroi realised too late that it was

on his right, not on his left, that the main effort of the enemy was to be made. He ordered reinforcements to march to Tavières; but it was taken before they could arrive. Tavières once taken, Overkirk charged the French cavalry; but these were the famous household troops, made up in great part of young nobles who cared only for fame, and were indifferent to safety. The Dutch cavalry were driven back, and Marlborough hastened to the spot with fresh squadrons. In the confusion, whilst he was busy encouraging his troops, he was surrounded by some of the enemy, who had recognised him; he was thrown from his horse, and was in great danger of being taken prisoner till his aide-de-camp dismounted and gave him his horse. His equerry advanced to hold the stirrup for him, and whilst he did so his head was shot off; but Marlborough escaped alive, and, though bruised by his fall, led on the charge himself.

The troops were fired by his spirit, and before their vigorous attack the enemy gave way. The Danish and the Dutch troops charged at the same time, and the French were driven back round Ramillies; whilst the Allies gained the height of Ottomond. The day was lost; but Villeroi and the Elector still hoped to make a stand at Offuz; the whole field was in such confusion that they hoped to be able to form their broken troops before the Allies could assemble to attack them. Marlborough, however, at once sent part of the

English horse against them, and they were forced to evacuate Offuz. They retreated in good order, the Elector encouraging his troops by his own bravery. But a successful attack made by the English horse on the Bavarian and Spanish regiments so terrified the mass of the French army that they turned and fled, plunging through the Great Gheet in the



wildest confusion. Their own baggage waggons, broken down and overturned in the hurry, hindered their flight, and immense numbers were taken prisoners, whilst all their baggage and most of their artillery fell into the enemy's hands.

The battle had lasted only three hours and a half; but the pursuit lasted till two in the morn-

ing, up to the very walls of Louvain. Marlborough and Overkirk halted at Meldert, within two miles of Louvain, and from thence on the morrow Marlborough sent letters to the Duchess and Godolphin with the joyful news. "Having been," he writes, "all Sunday, as well as last night, on horseback, my head aches to that degree that I must refer you to the bearer. I shall only add that we beat them into so great a consternation that they abandoned all their cannon."

At night, in the market-place of Louvain, Villeroi and the Elector held an anxious consultation by torchlight. They decided that they could not hold the city, and fled on to Brussels, abandoning all the open places in the country to the enemy.

In this great victory all the Allied troops distinguished themselves by their brave fighting. The French suffered from their over confidence, and, above all, from the superiority of Marlborough's generalship. His great ability is shown most clearly by this battle. The victory was owing to no lucky chance, to no superiority of force; in an equally-matched battle Marlborough, by his wise arrangements, by his rapidity in seizing every opportunity as it occurred, by his constant presence and activity in every part of the field, had driven the enemy from a strong position, and scattered them in hopeless confusion. The fighting, though severe, had not lasted long, and the losses were not nearly so heavy as at Blenheim. In killed, wounded, and prisoners, the French lost

fifteen thousand men, whilst the Allies lost over three thousand.

The results of this victory were surprising to Marlborough himself. At Louvain he was received with joy, and thence led his army across the Dyle, which the French were too dispirited to defend. Brussels, Malines, and all the chief towns of Brabant, opened their gates to him. He promised that their liberties should be observed, and entered Brussels in triumph on May 28th. Everywhere the inhabitants gladly threw off the yoke of France, and proclaimed with enthusiasm the Archduke Charles, "King of Spain and Overlord of the Netherlands." Ghent, Bruges, Oudenarde, and the chief towns of Flanders, followed the example of Brabant, and the French were obliged to desert the line of the Scheldt, and to fall back almost to their own frontier. "It is not to be expressed," wrote Marlborough to Godolphin, "the great success it has pleased God to give us by putting a consternation in the enemy's army; for they had not only a greater number than we, but all the best troops of France."

Marlborough next proceeded to besiege Antwerp, and here he expected a lengthened resistance; but the French troops within the city quarrelled with the Spanish and Flemish part of the garrison, who surrendered the town to Marlborough, whilst the French were allowed to retire. Ostend was then besieged. It had a strong garrison, and the soldiers were full of courage, for they remembered that a

hundred years before it had taken three years and the loss of eighty thousand men to reduce the city; but Marlborough carried on the attack with such vigour, that Ostend fell after a siege of nine days. Marlborough then moved his camp to superintend the siege of Menin. This fortress was situated on the Lys, and was one of the masterpieces of Vauban, the great French military engineer. In a desperate attack upon the fortifications Marlborough lost fourteen hundred men in two hours, but the garrison also suffered heavily; and after a siege of twenty-three days Menin fell. The Lys was the boundary between the Netherlands and France. Lewis XIV., anxious at least to protect his frontier, summoned his ablest general, Vendome, from Italy to command the army in the Netherlands. But Vendome found the troops so dispirited that he did not dare to venture upon any decided action. Marlborough was allowed to besiege without opposition Dendermond, a town which he desired for the safety of his winter quarters.

Dendermond was considered perfectly safe from any enemy. It was so situated at the conflux of the Scheldt and the Dender that the governor, by opening the sluices, could flood the surrounding country. "They must have an army of ducks to take it," said Lewis XIV. But the weather favoured them, and the city fell after a few days. "That place," wrote Marlborough, "could never have been taken but by the hand of God, which gave us seven weeks without any rain. The rain

began the next day after we had possession." Ath, another strong town on the Dender, surrendered on October 4th, after a siege of twelve days. Marlborough would have liked to go on to the siege of Mons, but was prevented by the timidity of the Dutch, and settled his army in winter quarters, some along the Dender, and some in the different towns in Brabant.

On the news of the wonderful result of the battle of Ramillies, the Emperor Joseph, with enthusiastic gratitude, had written to Marlborough, appointing him, in the name of the Archduke Charles, Governor of Brabant. The post was both honourable and lucrative, and Marlborough would gladly have accepted it. The English Government also wished him to do so; but he soon found out that even his warmest friends amongst the Dutch would bitterly resent it. Success brought out all the selfish and jealous feelings of the Dutch; and they looked out only for reaping advantages and new territory for themselves. As Marlborough wrote, "Such is their temper, that when they have misfortunes they are desirous of peace upon any terms; and when we are blessed by God with success, they are for turning it to their own advantage, without any consideration how it may be liked by their friends and allies." At last it was agreed that a provisional government, in the name of Charles, should be established in the Netherlands, and that the administration should be shared by Holland and England.

In Italy the tide of war had at last turned, and in the midst of his own triumph Marlborough was gladdened by the news of an equally brilliant success won by Prince Eugene. The campaign had opened dismally. The Duke of Savoy was so hard pressed, that it was impossible for him to take any steps to relieve Turin, which was firmly enclosed on all sides by the enemy's lines. But when Vendome was summoned to the Netherlands, the French army was left under the less able command of Villars and the Duke of Orleans. Prince Eugene had at last got together the troops with which he was coming to the aid of the Duke of Savoy. Through mountainous tracks, which had been hitherto considered impassable by any army, he marched upon Turin. The Duke of Savoy regained hope by his presence, and together they attacked the French army, though it was stronger in numbers, and entrenched in a secure position. The French were entirely routed and driven away from Turin on September 7th, and Eugene and the Duke of Savoy entered the town in triumph. The French were driven from Piedmont, and the beginning of next year saw the whole of North Italy in the hands of the Allies. But the selfish aims of Austria produced difficulties here, as the selfish aims of Holland produced difficulties in the Netherlands. Austria thought only of securing her own possessions in Italy without considering the interests of the Duke of Savoy, and the other Allies complained bitterly of the want of care

shown by the Emperor for the common cause. Marlborough received the news of the victory of Turin with the greatest joy. "It is impossible for me," he wrote to the Duchess, "to express the joy it has given me; for I do not only esteem, but I really love that Prince."

The news from Spain was of a less pleasing kind. Lewis XIV. had determined to make a great effort to win back what had been lost in 1705, and Philip V. led a large army to recover Barcelona, whilst the town was at the same time blockaded by a French fleet. It seemed as if it must be lost, for Peterborough had not sufficient forces to oppose the French. But just at the last moment an English fleet appeared in sight, and Philip was forced to raise the siege and retire to Madrid. Neither could he stay long in Madrid, but was forced to fly before the confederate army from the west under Galway and the Portuguese general Da Minas. It seemed as if at last Spain was wrested from the Bourbons, and was safe in the hands of the Allies. But here the tide turned. Galway wished Charles to press forward at once and make his entry into Madrid. But Charles wanted to enter in state, and said he must wait till his carriage was ready. This delay was fatal, for the inhabitants of Madrid were strongly in favour of Philip, and Galway soon found it impossible to hold the town for a King who could not trouble himself to come and take possession of it. He marched from Madrid to join the army of Charles, and Berwick with

the French army entered as he left it. Philip V. was growing extremely popular amongst the Spaniards, and his misfortunes had made them still more zealous for his cause. Berwick's army was swelled daily by new recruits, whilst the allied army dwindled from sickness and desertion, and the Allies, though they had too few soldiers, had too many generals. There were constant disputes and jealousies between Galway, Da Minas, Peterborough, and Charles and his Austrians. Peterborough was imperious and self-willed; he had no feelings of respect to curb his arrogant tongue, and continually offended Charles by his violent speeches. Every one wrote complaints to England and to Marlborough, and the recall of Peterborough was urgently pressed.

Peterborough himself was weary of a position which did not give him the authority he desired, and at last availed himself of a permission that had been given him when he left England, to go on to Italy and collect supplies for the Duke of Savoy. The Allies in Spain thus lost their one really able general, whose brilliant qualities, however, were rendered comparatively useless by his arrogance and flightiness.

The Allies retired before Berwick into Valencia, where they took up their winter quarters. The old jealousies of the rival kingdoms made Aragon, Valencia, and Catalonia zealous for the cause of Charles, just because Castile favoured Philip.

On the Rhine the campaign had produced no

results. The Margrave of Baden was sinking under a mortal disease, which increased his naturally stubborn and jealous temper. The French general, Villars, had hoped to signalize himself by some brilliant exploit; but his forces were so much weakened by the continual draft of troops to reinforce the army in the Netherlands, that he was forced to content himself with remaining on the defensive.

The prosperity of the Allies reached its highest point in this year. Lewis XIV. had suffered so severely on all sides, France was so terribly exhausted by the drain made upon it by the war, that he was led to make preliminary overtures of peace to the Dutch. The terms offered were, the formation of a strong barrier in the Netherlands for the Dutch; the recognition of Queen Anne; the cession of Spain, the Indies, and the Spanish Netherlands to the Archduke Charles, on condition that Milan and the Two Sicilies should be formed into a kingdom for Philip; and considerable commercial advantages to England and Holland. The Dutch were strongly inclined for peace, and these terms seemed to them all that could be desired. Marlborough thought that the French asked for too much in Italy, and that Milan certainly could not be conceded to them. He was himself anxious to continue the war; as his enemies said, from his desire for the large income he received as Commander-in-Chief; but, as he himself said repeatedly in his private as well as

his official letters, that he thought another successful campaign was necessary to procure a safe, honourable, and lasting peace. He prevailed so far with Heinsius and his other friends at the Hague, that the proposal of France to open conferences for the negotiation of peace was rejected. Preparations were therefore made on all sides for the next campaign. By the light of after events, it certainly seems as if the Allies would have done wisely to conclude a peace on the terms offered by Lewis XIV. Their affairs were never so prosperous again; and the terms they ultimately obtained, after the enormous expenditure of men and money involved in several years' more fighting, are insignificant when compared with those now suggested.

Whilst busy directing the campaign Marlborough had, as usual, been actively engaged in diplomatic matters. The English Government was anxious to get from the foreign powers a guarantee of the Protestant Succession. Negotiations for this purpose were first of all opened with the Dutch, and Marlborough offered that in return England would promise to secure to the Dutch as safe a barrier as they could desire. This question of a barrier always excited the grasping spirit of the Dutch. Their demands were so exorbitant that the jealousy of Austria was aroused; for all that was taken to form a barrier for Holland must be taken from the Spanish Netherlands, the dominions of the Archduke Charles, and after much weary corres-

pondence, which only served to inflame bitter feelings on all sides, nothing was settled.

The Duke of Marlborough reached London, on his return from the Hague, on the 18th November. He received the solemn thanks of both Houses of Parliament, who lauded his exploits in the most enthusiastic terms; they spoke of Ramillies as "a victory so great and glorious in its consequences, and attended with such continued successes through the whole course of this year, that no age can equal." The war was still so popular that the necessary supplies for the next campaign were voted without any opposition. As a substantial mark of the national gratitude, the House of Lords petitioned the Queen to continue, by Act of Parliament, Marlborough's title and honours to his daughters and their heirs male, as he had no son to inherit his name. It was also ordained, at Marlborough's special request, that the manor of Woodstock and the house of Blenheim should always go with the title, after the death of the Duchess, on whom it had been settled for life.

Further to celebrate the successes of the campaign, a procession was arranged to convey the colours and standards taken at Ramillies from Whitehall to Guildhall. The procession passed through St. James's Park, and the Queen appeared at one of the windows of the palace to do it honour. It was followed by the Duke himself, in one of the royal coaches, attended by a magnificent train of carriages filled with the foreign

ministers and nobility. The streets were crowded by the enthusiastic people; and followed by their joyful shouts Marlborough pursued his way to Vintners' Hall, where the Mayor and Common Council entertained him at a magnificent banquet.

CHAPTER X.

Political Parties in England.

DURING the last years the political views of Marlborough and Godolphin had been slowly changing. At the accession of Anne they were both looked upon as firm Tories; and the fact that the war was supported by the Tories was mainly due to its being under the direction of a Tory general. But the war was in reality a Whig war; it was the expression of the policy of William III.; it was the exact reverse of all that the Stuarts had done, and tended utterly to ruin the hopes still cherished by the Jacobites, as the most extreme Tories were called, that the Pretender might some day be called to the throne. At first the Tories were willing to support a Whig war, because it was carried on by a Tory general; and the Whigs were willing to submit patiently to their exclusion from all important offices, because they saw that a Tory government was willing to carry on the war with vigour. But this state of things could not last. The Government was soon forced

to break with the most violent Tories. Rochester first, and then Nottingham, lost their places, which were filled up by more moderate men. The Government had to lean more and more upon the Whigs for support in their policy. The extreme Tories lost no opportunity of attacking Marlborough and Godolphin; whilst, on the other hand, the Whigs, as was natural, began to weary of being kept from all share in the Government. Between the two parties, Godolphin, a man of no decision of character, and with no firm convictions of his own, was hopelessly harassed and perplexed; whilst Marlborough, who cared little for party, and only wished to be left free to carry on the war in his own way, grew daily more indignant with party intrigue, and more determined to carry on the government by means of moderate men, without regard to party. The Duchess was entirely on the side of the Whigs, who courted her that she might use her influence in their favour. A perpetual busy-body, she mixed herself in everything, and lost no opportunity of stirring up Godolphin and Marlborough against the Tories, and urging them to favour the Whigs. She used her influence with Anne in the same way, and in no measured terms urged the cause of the Whigs on her royal mistress, whom she was accustomed to rule at her pleasure. But she miscalculated the strength of Anne's obstinacy. Anne was a decided Tory, and before all things attached to the Anglican Church. Her great objection to the

Whigs was, that they were too latitudinarian in their religious views, and she was not to be bullied into bestowing her favour upon them. The more she resisted the more overbearing the Duchess became, and there were times when it seemed as if the Queen was wearying of the violent tyranny which her favourite exerted over her.

After the battle of Blenheim, the murmurs of the Tories were lost in the general enthusiasm of the nation. But when Parliament met, in the end of 1704, the violent Tories found a means of secretly attacking the Government by introducing a bill against Occasional Conformity. The object of this bill was to prevent Dissenters from qualifying themselves to fill posts in the government by receiving the Sacrament, as prescribed by the Test Act, according to the rites of the Anglican Church, and still continuing to frequent Dissenting places of worship. This bill had been first brought into the House in 1703, and had then been warmly supported by the Government, as it was in entire accordance with the decidedly High Church opinions of the Queen. In the House of Commons the Tories had a majority, and the bill easily passed, but was thrown out by the Whig majority of the House of Lords. The same thing happened in the next session, when the ardour of the Government for the bill had decidedly cooled; and in 1704 the bill was brought forward a third time, in direct opposition to the wishes of the Government. This time the extreme Tories

wished to make victory certain. They tacked on to the bill against Occasional Conformity a bill granting the land tax. It was a rule of the House that the Lords could not amend a money bill; they must either accept or reject it as it stood. If therefore these two bills had gone up to the Lords tacked together, the Lords would have been obliged either to accept the Occasional Conformity Bill or to throw the Government into extreme confusion by refusing the necessary supplies.

This violent measure on the part of the extreme Tories, or "Tackers," as they were now called, disgusted the moderate Tories, who, with Harley at their head, combined with the Whigs to throw out the bill. The Occasional Conformity Bill alone easily passed the Commons, but was once more thrown out by the Lords, where even Marlborough and Godolphin voted with the Whigs against it. These proceedings completed the breach between Marlborough and Godolphin and the extreme Tories. Marlborough expressed it as his opinion that no quarter should be given to the "Tackers;" and Godolphin wrote to the Duchess: "Although there must be no present resentment shown, nor so much as threatened, yet I assure you, when the session is over, I shall never think any man fit to continue in his employment who gave his vote for the tack."

The three years during which the Parliament was then entitled to sit, according to the Triennial Act, were at an end, and every effort was made by

the Government to prevent the Tackers from being returned at the new election. Still Marlborough, not quite satisfied with the results, wrote to the Queen from the Rhine, July 27th, 1705: "I find there are enough of the Tackers and their adherents to stir everything that may be uneasy to your Majesty and the Government. To prevent which I think your Majesty should advise with the Lord Treasurer what encouragement may be proper to give the Whigs, that they may look upon it as their own concern early to beat down and oppose all proposals of that sort before they come to any height." He went on to beg the Queen to let nothing interfere with the confidence she put in Godolphin; "for he is the only man in England capable of giving such advice as may keep you out of the hands of both parties." Disgusted with the extreme Tories, and beginning to lean more decidedly towards the Whigs, Marlborough still clung to his hope of carrying on the government without placing it entirely in the hands of either party.

But the Whigs were determined no longer to be kept out of office. They were a strong and compact body. At their head were five peers, known as the Junto, who kept them together and guided their policy. These were Somers, Wharton, Halifax, Oxford, and Sunderland, all men of distinguished ability and tried merit.

Somers was perhaps the only one of the five who has any claim to real greatness. In an age

when nearly every statesman changed his politics if it suited his interest, as easily as he changed his clothes, he had remained from purely patriotic motives a firm adherent of Whig principles. He had made his way in life entirely by his own abilities, and had first acquired notoriety by his able defence of the seven bishops in the reign of James II. He was a man of great culture and learning, the friend and patron of Locke and Addison, and master of all social graces. As a lawyer he was learned and acute; his eloquence called forth general admiration, and both in speaking and writing his style was terse, forcible, and clear. No heat of party animosity could ruffle his calm dignity; no desire for personal advancement could make him untrue to his principles. To him the Whigs looked up as their real leader; and it may have been perhaps the influence of his wise and sober character that kept them from going the same lengths in intriguing and caballing that the Tories did at that time. William III. had at once recognized Somers's merit; he had made him Lord Chancellor, and raised him to a peerage. He was the only one amongst the Whigs whom William really trusted and liked. At Anne's accession he was excluded, with the other Whigs, from the Privy Council; but he showed no bitterness towards the Government, and continued to interest himself actively in politics, giving his warm support to all measures that he thought for the good of his country. Swift, whilst still an ad-

herent of the Whigs, lauded Somers in the warmest terms. He dedicated to him the *Tale of the Tub*, and in his dedication says, "There is no virtue either of a public or private life which some circumstances of your own have not often produced upon the stage of the world." Later on, when he was using all his powers of invective against the Whigs, even he could not deny Somers's great abilities. He says, "I allow him to have possessed all excellent qualifications except virtue. He had violent passions, and hardly subdued them by his great prudence."

Thomas, Lord Wharton, was a man of brilliant talents, but of a dissolute and profligate character. His father had been a Covenanter, and he was brought up with all the strictness of the Puritans. From such surroundings the sudden plunge into the wild dissipation of London after the Restoration loosened for him, as it did for so many others, all moral ties. He became an open scoffer at religion and virtue, ribald and profane in his talk, and shameless in his manner of life. But his affable manners, his ready and eloquent speech and shining abilities, made him extremely popular. Careless of everything else, he was at all times a consistent Whig, and was lauded by his party as having been one of the main instruments in bringing about the Revolution. William III. had rewarded his zeal by giving him various offices, but could never feel real sympathy for a man of his character. His exclusion from all share in

the government after the accession of Anne drove him into violent opposition, which was only slightly moderated by Somers's influence. He reviled his opponents in coarse and unmeasured language, and was in his turn looked upon by the Tories as one of the most unprincipled and dangerous Whigs. Swift says of him, "He was the most universal villain that ever I knew." The Whigs themselves could not look upon him as an altogether useful friend, but spoke of him as a man "who could do more good or harm" than any one else.

Charles Montague, Lord Halifax, though of good family, had, as younger son of a younger son of the Earl of Manchester, begun life with no prospects, and no resources but his own abilities. His rise had been surprisingly rapid. At the age of thirty, directly after the Revolution, he obtained a seat in the House of Commons, and soon distinguished himself by his great skill in debate. He devoted himself to the study of finance, and at the age of thirty-seven became First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was the chief founder of the Bank of England, and the new East India Company; he restored the currency and established paper credit; for some years he seemed to carry all before him. His influence and his popularity were unbounded; he was the leader of the majority, and the most distinguished figure in the House of Commons. Himself a cultivated man, and having won some

slight fame in his youth by his poems, he was a patron and friend to men of letters, especially to Addison and Isaac Newton. In 1700 William made him Lord Halifax, the title having become extinct by the death of the great Trimmer; but his popularity was already on the wane. With all his intellect he had a weak head, and his astonishing success had been too much for him. His vanity and self-sufficiency made him ludicrous and difficult to work with. The wits of the day made fun of the way in which he tried to make even his small person of importance by a majestic strut and imperious look. Later on, when the Whigs were no longer predominant, his restless vanity and ambition made his party doubtful of his trustworthiness; he could not patiently endure exclusion from office, like Somers.

Edward Russell, Earl of Orford, to a great extent owed the confidence which the Whig party placed in him to the fact that he was the brother of the virtuous William Russell, who had been so shamefully executed for his supposed complicity in the Rye-house Plot. He had begun life in the Duke of York's household, and had there formed an early friendship with Marlborough. He was skilful both as a naval commander and as a manager of naval affairs, but he was of a grasping and ambitious character, and, though it was not known till after his death, had lost all claim to the confidence of the Whigs by his secret communications with James at St. Germains. He

had won popularity by his victory off La Hogue, and the Whigs believed that naval affairs could only prosper under his direction, but as a statesman he never gained distinction.

These four men were the leaders of the Whig party during the reign of William III. Sunderland, the youngest member of the Junto, had only risen to importance in Anne's reign. He was in everything the follower of Somers; but he was wanting in tact and moderation, and the violence of his political opinions made Marlborough decidedly unwilling to do anything for his promotion, in spite of the close tie that bound them together. In the Duchess, however, Sunderland had a firm friend; she never wearied of pushing his claims, and when Marlborough and Godolphin were obliged to lean more on the support of the Whigs, one of the most pressing demands of the Junto was, that some post should be obtained for Sunderland; for as Marlborough's son-in-law he at least was entitled to advancement. But the Queen, besides her decided dislike to the Whigs, had a special dislike to Sunderland, and all that could be obtained for him at first was an appointment as ambassador extraordinary to Vienna, in 1705.

When Sunderland returned from Vienna, in 1706, no effort was spared to get him made Secretary of State, in place of Sir Charles Hedges, a Tory. The Queen showed the greatest objection to the change. She had a horror of falling into the

hands of the Whigs. She writes to Godolphin: "Why, for God's sake, must I, who have no interest, no end, no thought, but for the good of my country, be made so miserable as to be brought into the power of one set of men? And why may not I be trusted, since I mean nothing but what is equally for the good of all my subjects? There is another apprehension I have of Lord Sunderland being Secretary, which I think is a natural one, which proceeds from what I have heard of his temper. I am afraid he and I should not agree long together, finding by experience my humour and those that are of a warmer, will often have misunderstandings. . . . I conclude, begging you to consider how to bring me out of my difficulties, and never leave my service, for Jesus Christ's sake; for . . . this is a blow I cannot bear."

But Godolphin knew that the Whigs would not support the Government unless Sunderland were made Secretary. They had waited long enough without any reward for their services. Without their support the war could not go on, and Godolphin did not cease to urge the Queen to give way. The Duchess interfered with her usual violence, and pressed Sunderland's claims on the Queen in angry letters, in which she forgot all decency, until she thoroughly disgusted her. In one letter she says: "Upon recalling everything to my memory that may fill my heart with all that passion and tenderness I once had for Mrs. Morley, I do solemnly protest I think I can noways return

what I owe her so well as by being honest and plain. As one mark of it, I desire you would reflect whether you have never heard that the greatest misfortunes that ever has happened to any of your family has not been occasioned by having ill advice and an obstinacy in their tempers."

The Queen was strengthened in her resistance by Harley, who managed by his insinuating behaviour to retain the confidence of Marlborough and Godolphin, whilst secretly intriguing against them in the Government. The Whigs saw that he was the real cause of the opposition to their wishes, and threatened to demand his dismissal from office. At last, after about three months' constant discussion and correspondence on the subject, the Queen was persuaded to give way. Godolphin's frequent threats of resignation helped to make her comply, and she was afraid lest the Whigs should turn their attacks on Harley, to whom she clung as a moderate Tory, and in whose opinions she had entire confidence. When Marlborough returned from Holland after the successful campaign which had followed Ramillies, and joined Godolphin in his urgent entreaties that she would give way, Anne could no longer resist, and on the 3rd December, 1706, Sunderland's appointment to the Secretaryship was announced, and was followed by the introduction of several other less important Whigs into the Government; while several Whigs were promoted to the peerage. Harley was the

only Tory of importance who retained his post, and the violent Tories were all excluded from the Privy Council. Marlborough and Godolphin had attained at last to a composite government, such as they had long desired.

But whilst party intrigues seemed to be absorbing all the energies of the English Government, a question of far greater importance was at length being brought to a successful issue. One of the last acts of William III. had been to send a message to the Commons, pressing upon them the immediate necessity of taking steps to bring about a union between Scotland and England. Commissioners for this purpose had been named early in Anne's reign, but neither England nor Scotland showed much zeal in the matter, and it was allowed to drop. But as time went on, the urgent necessity for a union became daily clearer. Scottish affairs were much disturbed, and what was more, the Scottish Parliament showed intentions of naming a different successor to Anne from the one appointed by the English Act of Settlement. Godolphin was too timid and uncertain to adopt any vigorous measures, and only seemed perplexed by the difficulty of the question. At last both Whigs and Tories combined to press upon him the necessity of appointing a new Commission, and in April, 1706, thirty-one Commissioners from each side begun their meetings. Chief amongst these Commissioners in knowledge and intellect was Lord Somers, and

to him more than to any one man the work of the Union is due. The other Commissioners submitted to his powerful mind, and little by little the difficult points were settled. When the Commissioners had done their work, the Union had to be approved by the Houses of Parliament in both countries. In Scotland it met with a violent opposition, but after some alterations was at last carried. Through the influence of the Government and the Whigs, who were determined to see an end of the question, it was also carried in the English Parliament; and finally, on the 6th March, 1707, the Act of Union became law. Its chief provisions were, that there should be one Kingdom, called Great Britain; one Parliament, to which Scotland was to send forty-five members, about one-twelfth of the whole number; and one Successor, the Electress of Hanover, as decided in the English Act of Settlement. To the House of Lords Scotland was to send sixteen Peers, elected out of her whole Peerage. The establishment of a Government which satisfied the Whigs, and the final settlement of the Union, seemed to promise to Godolphin and Marlborough some rest and freedom from party intrigue; but they were soon to discover how impossible it was to govern in England according to their favourite scheme of a coalition. It was their fearfulness of joining themselves entirely to one party, lest they should lose influence or office by so doing, which in the end proved so fatal to them. Marlborough may

have been sincere in his expressions of dislike to both political parties. We cannot wonder that the small intrigues in England disgusted and wearied him, when his mind was fully enough occupied with the affairs of the Grand Alliance, and the conduct of the war. But Godolphin's entire want of any political principles, his hesitating dealings, first with one party, and then with another, cannot be excused in a man who was at the head of the Government. To have joined cordially with the Whigs, or to have remained true to the Tories, and to the wishes of the Queen, would have been not only a more dignified, but in the end a more successful course of conduct.

Harley's position in the Government gave him abundant opportunity to intrigue in favour of the Tories. As Secretary of State he had constant access to the Queen, and whilst he still enjoyed the complete confidence of the Duke of Marlborough, was doing his utmost to inflame the Queen's irritation against the Duchess and against the Whigs. The Tories had another still more powerful friend, and the Duchess a still more dangerous foe, at Court, a foe, moreover, whom she had unwittingly been the means of introducing herself.

A desire to lessen her own duties at Court, and at the same time to help a poor relation, had led the Duchess to ask the Queen to make a cousin of hers, Abigail Hill, who was in needy circum-

stances, one of her bedchamber women. She thought that Mrs. Hill, owing everything to her, and being besides a person of very ordinary abilities, could not possibly exert an influence at Court hostile to hers. But the Queen was one of those women who like to lean on some one, and who had by nature a great amount of romantic tenderness, for which she was compelled to find an object. She was wearied by the overbearing arrogance of the Duchess, whom she had once so fondly loved, and she found a great relief in the gentle, obsequious conduct of Mrs. Hill, who was entirely without pretensions. Besides this, Abigail shared the Queen's views in Church matters and in politics. Clever enough to see in what ways the Duchess managed to make herself disagreeable to the Queen, she adopted quite opposite tactics. She tried to anticipate Anne's wishes, was humble and deferential in her manners, and agreed with all the Queen's opinions.

Related to the Duchess through her mother, Mrs. Hill was also related to Harley through her father, and to him now she was of the greatest possible use. Through her he could impress all his views and wishes upon the Queen, and by her means he could irritate the Queen more against the Duchess, and through the Duchess against the Whigs. The Duchess, who, in spite of all signs to the contrary, was entirely confident in her power over the Queen, was slow to believe that any new person, and above all a creature so mean

as her own dependant, could usurp any of the Queen's favour. But at last it became impossible to doubt what was going on. The Duke, who was informed of it whilst in Holland, in June, 1707, thought it would be easy to put a stop to it. "If you are sure," he wrote to the Duchess, "that Mrs. Hill does speak of business to the Queen, I should think you might speak to her with some caution which might do good; for she certainly is grateful, and will mind what you say."

The Duchess spoke both to Mrs. Hill and the Queen, but without any caution, blaming the Queen with her usual violent language, both in conversation and in letters, for her confidence in Mrs. Hill. The Queen's letter, humble as her letters always were, shows clearly the real state of things. "I give my dear Mrs. Freeman many thanks for her letter . . . but I have so often been unfortunate in what I have said to you, that I think the less I say to your last letter the better; therefore I shall only, in the first place, beg your pardon once more for what I said the other day, which I find you take ill, and say something in answer to your explanation of the suspicions you seemed to have concerning your cousin Hill, who is very far from being an occasion of feeding Mrs. Morley in her passion, as you are pleased to call it; she never meddles with anything. I believe others that have been in her station in former times have been tattling and very impertinent; but she is not at all of that temper. . . . I hope,

since in some part of your letter you seem to give credit to a thing because I said it was so, you will be as just in what I have said now about Hill; for I would not have any one hardly thought of by my dear Mrs. Freeman for your poor, unfortunate, but ever faithful Morley's notions or actions."

Soon after the Duchess's wrath was still more excited by discovering that Mrs. Hill had been secretly married to Mr. Masham, a gentleman whose place in the royal household was also owing to her favour, and that the Queen had been present at the wedding. On hearing this she at once rushed to the Queen, and heaped upon her the most violent reproaches for having connived at this act of concealment. The Duchess had no idea of trying to win back her former favour by soft words, and her angry reproaches only made matters daily worse.

Meanwhile the Whigs were growing more and more indignant at the influence which Harley had with the Queen. Some ecclesiastical appointments made by the Queen, entirely in the High Church interest, without consulting Godolphin or Marlborough, also caused much irritation. The state of things tended to make the Whigs distrustful of the good intentions of the two Ministers, who themselves began to understand the intrigues of Harley, but did not venture to go against him for fear of offending the Queen. Marlborough seems to have been at times anxious to act more vigorously. He writes to Godolphin: "I can't but think

there should be no time lost in speaking plainly to her Majesty, in letting her know what you and I think is her interest. If she be of another opinion, I think you and I should honestly let her know that we shall not be able to carry on her business with success, so that she might have time to take her measures with such as will be able to serve her." But though this letter was shown to the Queen, it produced no effect; for she evidently did not believe in their threats of resignation, and she answered by a letter in her usual tone of humble appeal to Marlborough, justifying her conduct, and begging him always to speak freely to her. Marlborough grew more and more disgusted with the whole matter. "I am so weary of all this sort of management," he wrote to the Duchess, "that I think it is the greatest folly in the world to think any struggling can do good when both sides have a mind to be angry. When I say this I know I must go on in the command I have here, as long as the war lasts, but I would have nothing to do anywhere else."

The Whigs' indignation with the Government at last led them to join with the extreme Tories in a plan for attacking it. In the session of Parliament which began in October 1707, a violent speech was made by Wharton in the House of Lords, on the decay of trade, and against the conduct of naval affairs, which was specially intended to irritate Marlborough by incriminating his brother, Admiral Churchill. Rochester and the

extreme Tories proceeded to attack the conduct of the war; here Marlborough defended himself with a dignity and an ability which carried conviction to all who heard him, so that Lord Somers moved a resolution, which was unanimously carried, "That no peace could be reasonable or safe, either for her Majesty or her Allies, if Spain and the West Indies were suffered to continue in the power of the House of Bourbon." To separate the extreme Tories and the Whigs the Government once more drew near to the Whigs, and the Queen even was induced to make some concessions to gratify them, from fear lest their attacks should be turned on Harley.

Marlborough was at last convinced that the coalition Government could not stand. He hesitated awhile, afraid of offending the Queen by urging the dismissal of Harley; but it became so clear to him that Harley was intriguing, with a view of overthrowing the existing Government and bringing back the Tories, that it was imperative to take some decisive step. Suspicions were also aroused that Harley had been involved in treacherous negotiations with France. Both Godolphin and Marlborough, who were now assured of the firm support of the Whigs, informed the Queen that they would no longer serve with Harley. She persisted in refusing to dismiss him; and when on the 9th February a Cabinet Council was summoned, neither Marlborough nor Godolphin appeared at it.

Harley and the Queen affected to notice nothing, and Harley opened the business amidst uneasy murmurs from the other Ministers, till the Duke of Somerset took advantage of a moment's silence to say, "I do not see how we can deliberate when the Commander-in-Chief and the Lord Treasurer are absent." The Queen had to break up the meeting, and on the 11th February Harley resigned his office. He was doubtless influenced in so doing by the thought that he was hardly strong enough then to form a Tory Government himself, and that after a time he would be able, having entirely broken with Godolphin and Marlborough, to return to office with full power and the entire confidence of the Tories. With him retired St. John, and some other Tories, and their places were filled by Whigs, though as yet no other member of the Junto but Sunderland was given a share in the government. The Whigs demanded that Somers should be made President of the Council. Things went on as before. The Queen refused obstinately to give way, and the Whigs blamed Marlborough and Godolphin for her refusal. The state of things was complicated still further by the quarrels between the Duchess and the Queen, which daily increased in violence, and made the position of Marlborough and Godolphin very difficult. The Duchess continually charged the Queen with listening to no one but Mrs. Masham, and with still having communications with Harley; and all this

naturally only increased the Queen's dislike to the Whigs, and led her to cling more than ever to Mrs. Masham. Marlborough and Godolphin, as usual, threatened to resign if Somers were not admitted into the Government; but these threats were no more sincere than they had been before, and produced no effect upon the Queen.

The Whigs grew more and more angry, and threatened the Government with serious opposition. In the parliamentary elections in 1708, they exerted themselves to the utmost to obtain the return of Whig members. Sunderland even made use of the influence he possessed as member of the Government to obtain the return in Scotland of members hostile to the Government, and by this disloyal conduct deeply offended the Queen. But the Whigs at last discovered a means of influencing the Queen. They threatened to invite to England the heir-apparent, the Elector of Hanover, a proposal to which she had the strongest objection, and once more began their attacks upon the Admiralty, which were particularly painful to the Queen, as her husband, Prince George, was at its head. The Queen felt all the more bitterly the attacks against Prince George, because he was then dangerously ill. Fearful lest his last moments should be disturbed, she declared herself ready to give way to the wishes of the Whigs, in order that they might leave off their attacks on the Admiralty. The Prince died on the 29th of October, 1709, and shortly afterwards Lord Somers

was appointed President of the Council, Lord Wharton Viceroy of Ireland, and Lord Orford head of the Admiralty. At last the Whigs were in full possession of power, though the feelings of the Queen were more hostile to them than ever.

CHAPTER XI.

A Year of Disappointment.

THE affairs of the Great Alliance had given Marlborough many opportunities of showing his talents as a diplomatist. In the beginning of 1707 a new call was made upon him. Since 1700 the Northern nations of Europe had been engaged in a war for supremacy, which at length threatened to influence the general course of affairs in Europe. The ability of Gustavus Adolphus had made Sweden the chief nation of the North. She now owned Livonia, Esthonia, and most of the territory round the Baltic, and her power was watched with jealous anxiety by her neighbours. When in 1697 Charles XII. came to the throne, at the age of fifteen, it was thought that there was a good chance of stripping Sweden of some of her provinces during the minority of her King. Charles XII. was famous for his mad pranks and his wild hunting feats; little was to be expected from him as a ruler. Peter the Great was then Czar of Russia. His aim was to make Russia a European and a maritime power, though when he came to

the throne he possessed no port in his dominions but Archangel. He wished to wrest the provinces of Esthonia and Courland from Sweden, and made a secret league with Augustus, King of Saxony and Poland, and the King of Denmark, against Sweden. The Swedes were terrified, and the Council recommended conciliatory measures in the face of so many enemies; but Charles XII., who had hitherto taken no interest in State affairs, exclaimed passionately, "I am resolved never to begin an unjust war, nor to finish a just one except by the destruction of my enemies." Immediate preparations were made to meet the attacks of his foes, and one by one they were defeated before they had time to combine. Charles XII. showed himself a born soldier. In an age when rulers and generals surrounded themselves with ridiculous etiquette, and wasted their money on their own personal luxuries, he lived the simple, frugal life of a common soldier, and shared all the privations of his men. Whilst he endeared himself to them in this way, he was strict and severe as a commander, and enforced the most rigid discipline in his camp. Prayers were always offered up twice a day, and on the field of battle no soldier durst leave his ranks or spoil the dead till permission was given. But Charles XII. was more of a knight-errant than a statesman or a general. He could fight well, and make his men fight well, but he did not know how to take such measures as would make his kingdom prosperous, nor how to

plan his campaigns with wise forethought so as to lead to the final overthrow of his enemies. He was no match for Peter the Great, who had a distinct object in view, which he pursued steadily in spite of all obstacles. Charles XII. did not realize that Peter was his one really formidable enemy. He was content with entirely defeating the Russian army at Narva in 1700, and, instead of pursuing his advantage, turned aside to crush King Augustus of Poland. He spent years in Poland, fighting with Augustus, and setting up a new King "Stanislaus" in his stead, whilst Peter was organizing his armies, and laying the foundations of his new capital on Swedish soil.

At last, in 1706, Charles XII. followed Augustus into Saxony, and established his camp at Alt Ranstadt, near Leipzig. All eyes in Europe were turned upon the Northern hero, who before he was twenty years old had waged successful war against so many enemies. Lewis XIV. ventured to hope that he might win him over to fight on his side against the Allies. French envoys were sent to the Swedish camp with flattering tales to please the vanity of the young King, and it did not seem as if it would be difficult to gain him over, for he already had many grievances against Austria, and was fired with ambition to become, like his ancestor, Gustavus Adolphus, the arbiter of the destinies of Europe. Marlborough saw the danger, and employed a Prussian, General Grumkow, to discover the sentiments of Charles XII.

Grumkow wrote to Marlborough an interesting account of his doings at Alt Ranstadt. He dwelt particularly on the wretched fare provided at the tables of the King and his chief minister, Count Piper, and was struck by the way in which they swallowed their food in haste and silence. He said that "the Swedes in general are modest, but do not scruple to declare themselves invincible when the King is at their head."

Charles XII. expressed a great wish to see Marlborough; and the Allies, who were terrified lest he should conclude an alliance with France, urged Marlborough to visit him in person. He started for the Continent in April, 1707; and after settling matters at the Hague, continued his journey to Saxony, visiting Hanover and the Electoral family, on the way. On his first introduction to Charles XII. he greeted him with most flattering words. "Had not her sex prevented it," he said, "the Queen, my mistress, would have crossed the sea to see a Prince admired by the whole universe. I am in this particular more happy than the Queen, and I wish I could serve some campaigns under so great a general as your Majesty, that I might learn what I yet want to know in the art of war."

Marlborough stayed two days at Alt Ranstadt, and had several interviews with the King and his principal ministers and generals. His ready tongue and flattering words produced a great effect upon Charles XII., whilst he himself was

much struck by the force and simplicity of the young King. They discussed at length the affairs of Europe, and the grievances of Charles XII. against Austria; and Marlborough succeeded in disposing the King favourably towards the interests of the Grand Alliance. To make matters doubly sure, he gave pensions in the Queen's name to Count Piper and other leading Swedes, most of whom were already in receipt of French gold, but doubtless felt no hesitation in taking all they could get. Lewis XIV. kept his paid agents and spies at every Court in Europe, and few statesmen in those days were above taking a bribe. Marlborough saw at the Swedish camp Stanislaus, the newly-made King of Poland, and visited Augustus, Elector of Saxony, the dethroned King, at Leipzig, and had to use all his tact not to compromise himself or his Government with these rival monarchs. Before returning he paid a visit to the King of Prussia, to keep Frederic in good temper. "This journey," he writes to his wife, "has given me the advantage of seeing four kings, three of whom I had never seen. They seem to be all very different in their kinds. If I was obliged to make a choice it should be the youngest, which is the King of Sweden."

When Charles XII. felt that he had settled affairs in Germany to his satisfaction, he turned against his last remaining foe, Peter the Great. Peter had spent the interval in strengthening

himself to meet Charles, and Charles XII., brave soldier though he was, proved no match for Peter. He penetrated into Russia; but his campaign was ill-planned, and in the battle of Pultowa (1709) his veteran army was destroyed, the power of Peter was established, whilst Sweden lost its external dominions, and shrunk back once more into its former limits.

Marlborough went back to the Hague, having spent only eighteen days on his journey, a marvellously short time in those days of difficult travelling. Bad news greeted him on his return. A great battle had been fought in Spain, at Almanza, on April 25th, and the forces of the Allies had been completely defeated by the French, under the Duke of Berwick. Lord Galway, the English general, wrote that he looked upon the affairs of Spain as completely lost by this disaster. The Allies were driven back from all the country which they had conquered, and could only with difficulty maintain themselves in Catalonia. In Germany too the Allies met with a severe reverse. The Margrave of Baden had died in the beginning of the year. He was a learned if not a brilliant general, and had with care and skill fortified and maintained the lines of Stolhofen as a barrier between France and Baden. His successor as general of the German army, the Margrave of Baireuth, who had been chosen more for his rank than for his ability, suffered Villars to break through the lines on May 22,

and penetrate as far as Hochstadt, laying waste the country on his way. In all these misfortunes appeal was at once made to Marlborough. He succeeded in getting the Elector of Hanover made general of the German army, instead of the Margrave of Baireuth, and he planned an enterprise against Toulon, the French port in Provence, which might cause a diversion of the French forces favourable to the affairs of the Allies in Spain. Prince Eugene and the Duke of Savoy were to lead an army over the Alps to Toulon, which was at the same time to be attacked by an English fleet. The French possessed there immense magazines and stores, and the fortifications had been allowed to fall into dilapidation, so that Marlborough hoped it would be an easy prize, and that its capture would strike a blow at the French power, which might bring the war to a speedy end.

It was not easy to persuade the Emperor to agree to this enterprise against Toulon. He cared little for the general cause of the Allies, and was only anxious, in the tangled state of affairs, to secure his own safety, and get as much for himself as he could. The subjugation of Naples was now the aim of his ambition. That he might accomplish this he refused reinforcements to his brother Charles in Spain, and only after much persuasion allowed a portion of his army under Eugene to join in the attack on Toulon. He did not refuse entirely the demands of England and Holland,

but he delayed the departure of the expedition; and meanwhile Lewis XIV. found out what was going on. He sent Marshal Tessé to defend Toulon, who found that there was much to be done; for Toulon was "not a fortress, but rather a garden." It was surrounded with large country houses, orchards, and convents, all of which had to be destroyed; and four thousand peasants, with the sailors from the fleet, were employed night and day in erecting the necessary fortifications. They toiled so hard that the works were already far advanced when Prince Eugene and the Duke of Savoy came in sight on the 26th of July. Still the Allied troops were in good spirits, and, encouraged by the appearance of the English fleet at the mouth of the harbour, were eager to attack the town. Unfortunately there was much jealousy between Prince Eugene and the Duke of Savoy; it looks as if the Duke had only been half-hearted in the scheme. They could not agree upon prompt measures, and the troops were disappointed by hearing that, instead of trying to take the town by assault, they were to resort to the wearisome alternative of a siege. All the wasted time was made good use of by the French, and Marshal Tessé's army was daily reinforced. The Allies suffered from sickness and want of supplies; and at last their position became so hopeless that there remained nothing for them but retreat. Fortunately they were not pursued by the French, and Prince Eugene, on his way back, succeeded in

taking Susa, which secured the approach to Turin.

The failure of this expedition, from which Marlborough and the English Government had hoped so much, was a bitter disappointment. It showed clearly the difficulty of getting the different members of the Alliance to work cordially together, as the Court of Vienna and the Duke of Savoy had no other objects in view but their own advantage. Prince Eugene in anger declared his intention of never serving again with the Duke of Savoy. Meanwhile the Austrian expedition into Naples had been entirely successful. The Neapolitans received them with joy, and gladly renounced their allegiance to Philip V. Italy was thus entirely lost to the Bourbons; but this was not really a misfortune to Lewis XIV. Having no longer to keep an army in Italy, he was able to reinforce his armies in other places and save some expense.

Marlborough hoped to signalize the campaign of 1707 by some important victory in the Netherlands, but Vendome, the French general who opposed him, received strict orders not to risk a battle. Marlborough changed his camp several times, and did his utmost to force the French to fight, but in vain. The summer, too, was very wet, and the heavy rains impeded the movements of the troops; whilst the Dutch Deputies, frightened by the defeat at Almanza, were more obstructive than ever. The whole campaign brought nothing

but disappointment, whilst party struggles at home, and the difficulty of managing the affairs of the Allies, made Marlborough long for rest. Lord Peterborough, who had been recalled from his command in Spain, had been spending his time in travelling all over Europe, from one Court to another, discussing public affairs, and making proposals for which he had no authority. He at last reached Marlborough's camp at Soignies, in August, and disturbed him much by a ceaseless flow of talk about his grievances. He writes to the Duchess: "The ill weather hinders me from going abroad, so that Lord Peterborough has the opportunity of very long conversations. What is said one day, the next destroys; so that I have asked him to put his thoughts in writing." Peterborough at last went on to England, to demand justification for the indignity which had been offered him in his recall from Spain.

As the season went on Marlborough saw that nothing could be done that year. All that now remained was to prepare for the next campaign. Meanwhile the Dutch were growing weary of the war. Upon them and upon England all the expense fell, and they began to speak of peace. In England, too, there was an increasing party that clamoured against the war, and accused Marlborough of continuing it for his own advantage. In reality no one longed for peace more ardently than he did, as can be seen continually in his private letters to his wife; but he wished it to be

a sure peace, and he believed that the time for that had not yet come. He was thoroughly worn out. "I have no heart nor spirits left," he writes in October; and even then he might not return to rest in England, but had to travel off to Frankfort to arrange the plan of the next campaign with the Elector of Hanover and Count Wratislaw, the Austrian Minister. He hoped to arrange that Prince Eugene should command in Spain, and was so much vexed at the difficulties thrown in the way of this scheme, that he wrote to Godolphin, saying that he was inclined, if this did not succeed, to throw up his command altogether; "for," he adds, "if things go on as I think they will, both in England and Holland, nothing shall prevail with me to lose that reputation I have hazarded for this war." But the Emperor would not hear of sending Prince Eugene so far off, and wished to employ him in Germany. No definite plans for the next campaign could be made at Frankfort, or at the Hague, whither Count Wratislaw followed Marlborough.

Marlborough was not able to go back to England till the beginning of November. He found party struggles raging bitterly, and great discontent with the course of the war. A new misfortune had spread general mourning over England. As the English fleet was returning from Toulon, under the command of Sir Cloudesley Shovel, it was overtaken by a storm off the Scilly Isles. The admiral's ship struck the Gilstone rock, and sank

with all on board; two other great ships which followed also struck the rock and sank; of the crews of these three ships only one man escaped. Sir Cloudesley Shovel had begun life as a cabin boy, and had risen entirely by his own merits to be one of the first naval commanders of his day, when he was drowned at the age of fifty-seven.

We have already seen how the attitude of the Tories with regard to the war compelled Marlborough and Godolphin at this time to make common cause with the Whigs, and give up all hope of governing without the aid of party. The Government was still further strengthened by events which occurred in the beginning of 1708. Lewis XIV., who never lost sight of anything which might weaken the Allies, and who had watched the growing discontent of the Tories, thought that the time had come for striking a blow in favour of James Edward, the Pretender, son of James II. He knew that there was much discontent in Scotland, and tried to foment it by his agents, whose reports led him to believe that the greater part of the Scottish nation would rise in arms in favour of James Edward. Five men-of-war were fitted out at Dunkirk, to take James Edward over to Scotland. He was then barely twenty years old, but an able French officer was sent with him to direct the expedition. Abundance of gold and silver plate, gay liveries, and all the finery necessary for a splendid court, were given him by his royal patron. Everything had

been kept profoundly secret; but at the last moment the Pretender fell ill of the measles, and the expedition could not start till he had recovered. The delay gave the English, who heard of their danger from Holland, time to prepare to meet it. Fortunately Marlborough was still in England, and he at once made preparations for getting over troops from Holland. The Houses of Parliament put aside all considerations of party, and voted addresses to the Queen displaying the most zealous loyalty. Many Jacobites were arrested, and the whole attitude of the country showed that, for the time at least, the Pretender had little reason to hope for support in England.

An English fleet was sent to watch the movements of the French expedition, which was awaiting at Dunkirk the favourable moment to sail for Scotland. But a gale having driven the English from their station, the French were able to start. They reached the Firth of Forth in safety, but saw no signs of the preparations which their Scottish friends had promised to make to meet them, and they were soon terrified by the appearance of the English fleet in their pursuit. It was hopeless to think of landing in the face of an enemy who largely outnumbered them, and they determined to sail round the north of Scotland to Inverness, where the Highland clans were supposed to be strongly in favour of the cause of the Stuarts. But contrary winds drove them out to sea, and they were battered about helplessly for a month, when

they managed to get back to Dunkirk. The expedition had proved a disastrous failure; it had done nothing but increase the hatred of the English people to Lewis XIV., and deepen their confidence in Marlborough and Godolphin. Lewis XIV. was much disappointed; he had hoped to weaken his enemies for the next campaign, but was obliged to prepare to meet them with unbroken front.

CHAPTER XII.

Oudenarde.

AS soon as all danger of invasion was over Marlborough started for the Hague, where he met Prince Eugene to arrange the plan of the next campaign. The Emperor had definitely refused to allow Prince Eugene to go to Spain, but promised to send some troops there under Count Staremberg. Eugene was to command an army which was to be got together to act on the Moselle; whilst the Elector of Hanover was to command the German army on the Rhine. But though this was to be the plan of the campaign, as publicly stated, Eugene and Marlborough came to a private agreement that Eugene was to lead his army to combine with Marlborough's, that they might strike a decisive blow in the Netherlands. It was easy for Eugene and Marlborough, who knew no jealousy of one another, to work together; but it was another matter to get the other Allies to fall in with their plans. Each year there was the same difficulty in prevailing on the different German Princes to supply the troops they had promised; each year

they made new demands before they could be persuaded to give their aid. Prince Eugene, who was, like Marlborough, an able diplomatist as well as a great general, and who possessed the entire confidence of the Austrian Court, started from the Hague to visit the Courts of the different Allies, and by persuasion and promises to hasten their preparations. He made Marlborough promise to meet him at Hanover, to soothe the jealous temper of the Elector, who did not at all like the idea that a new German army was to be formed on the Moselle, for he feared lest greater fame should follow the deeds of Eugene's army than of his own. He was pacified, however, by the fair words of Eugene and Marlborough; but they did not dare to tell him what was their real plan for the campaign. Their stay at Hanover was very short. Eugene went on to Vienna to hasten the assembling of the troops; Marlborough returned to the Hague, and then went to join his army near Brussels.

The Duchess and Godolphin hoped that after his meeting with Eugene at the Hague he would come back to England for a short while. They were vexed that he went to Hanover instead. They wanted his aid in their party difficulties at home, and did not seem to see that he had enough on his mind already. Marlborough's answers to their querulous letters show his utter weariness of all these feuds, and his earnest desire for a little peace and rest; but nothing is of importance to him compared with the love of his wife. "All

this I could bear," he writes to her, "if I could be so happy as to gain your love and esteem; for however unhappy my passion and temper may make you, when I have time to recollect I never have any thought but what is full of kindness for you." Once or twice he says, that if he only can do something great for the Queen's cause in this campaign he would like to retire, that he might enjoy a little rest with his wife, and be sometimes with his children. His thoughts run upon the magnificent house that was preparing for them at Blenheim, and he finds time to look after the making of hangings for it in Brussels. He writes to the Duchess: "I have been to see the hangings for your apartment and mine. As much as are done of them I think are very fine. . . . I should be glad at your leisure that you would direct Vanbrugh to finish the breaks between the windows in the great cabinet with looking-glass; for I have resolved to furnish the rooms with the finest hangings I can get."

The preparations for the campaign were not getting on as quickly as Marlborough had hoped. He writes: "The general backwardness of the Germans is extremely discouraging." And again: "I would not willingly blame Prince Eugene; but his arrival at the Moselle will be ten days after his promise." The French, who had only themselves to depend upon, and who had not to wait for troublesome allies, had already assembled a formidable army under Vendome. With

him was sent the Duke of Burgundy, Lewis XIV.'s grandson and heir, and the Pretender. The presence of the Duke of Burgundy in the army was a sign that they intended to do great things, the fame of which might cast glory upon the royal Prince.

The way in which the Dutch had administered the government of the Spanish Netherlands since their conquest by Marlborough had caused much discontent among the population. The French knew this, and determined to make use of it. Vendome misled Marlborough by marching as if to attack Louvain, and Marlborough fixed his camp at Terbank, immediately outside it. Then the French suddenly broke up their camp, and marched towards the Scheldt. Bodies of troops were detached and sent against Ghent and Bruges, where the inhabitants, already in correspondence with the French, let them into the town, and enabled them to overpower the garrison. Marlborough, as soon as he heard of the march of the French army, broke up his camp, and followed them the day after they had started. He soon heard that he was too late to save Bruges and Ghent. Alarm spread throughout the country and the army. An attack upon Brussels was feared. Marlborough saw that the only thing to be done was to risk a battle without awaiting the arrival of Prince Eugene's troops.

Eugene had been pushing on with the utmost haste; and, thinking that a battle was imminent,

came on alone without his army. He reached Marlborough's camp soon after the capture of Ghent and Bruges was known. Marlborough greeted him joyfully. "I am not without hopes of congratulating your Highness on a great victory," he said; "for my troops will be animated by the presence of so distinguished a commander." The French had determined next to attack Oudenarde, and Marlborough managed to send reinforcements there, which entered the town in safety. It was an anxious moment, and with fatigue and anxiety Marlborough fell ill. His doctor pressed him to leave the camp, but he refused, and from his tent gave orders for the movements of the army. The enemy were proceeding to invest Oudenarde, and wished to occupy a strong camp at Lessines, on the Dender; but Marlborough was too quick for them. He sent on a corps under General Cadogan to occupy Lessines, and followed with his army, marching day and night. They reached Lessines in time to see the French army appearing just too late upon the heights. Marlborough had thus managed to place himself between them and their own frontier. They withdrew, disappointed, to cross the Scheldt at Gavre, and shelter themselves in a strong position behind the river, as they were obliged to give up hopes of investing Oudenarde. Marlborough's next plan was to cross the Scheldt a little higher up than the French, to place himself between them and Oudenarde, and, if possible, force them to give battle. It was a bold scheme,

for the army had to march fifteen miles before it could be brought face to face with the enemy.

Cadogan was once more sent on to prepare bridges for crossing the Scheldt. He left Lessines at dawn on the 11th July, and the whole army followed at eight o'clock. Whilst Cadogan was preparing, the French were crossing the river lower down, at Gavre, without the smallest suspicion that the enemy were so near. By noon Cadogan's bridges were ready, and leaving some of his troops to guard them, he passed over with the rest to reconnoitre. The country to the north of Oudenarde, in which the French were taking up their position, is fertile and richly cultivated, watered by many tributaries from the Scheldt, and covered with villages and wind-mills. Its whole surface is undulating, rising at times into bolder hills, which are called Couters. Cadogan observed some foraging parties of the French about the villages of Eyne and Heurne, and sent his cavalry to attack them. He drove them back, and took several prisoners. The French now learnt the nearness of the Allies, and a large body of troops was sent against Cadogan. He might have been annihilated, but fortunately at that moment the cavalry of the main allied army was seen crossing the bridges. Marlborough, who knew how near the French were, had been alarmed for the safety of Cadogan. He pressed forward with Eugene at the head of the Prussian dragoons, urging them to full gallop in his haste. The French, when they

saw them on the bridges, thought the whole army was at hand, and fell back.

The experienced eye of Vendome could see from the clouds of dust in the distance that the main body of the army was some way behind, and that there was still time for attack. But the French army was divided amongst itself. The cultivated and religious Duke of Burgundy was too disgusted with the coarse and profane character of Vendome to be able to appreciate his military genius; he preferred listening to other advisers, and Vendome was hampered on all sides. Now when it would have been advisable to await the Allies near the spot where they would cross the river, and attack them, if possible, before they could form, the Duke of Burgundy insisted upon withdrawing to a strong position on the heights on the other side of the little river Norken.

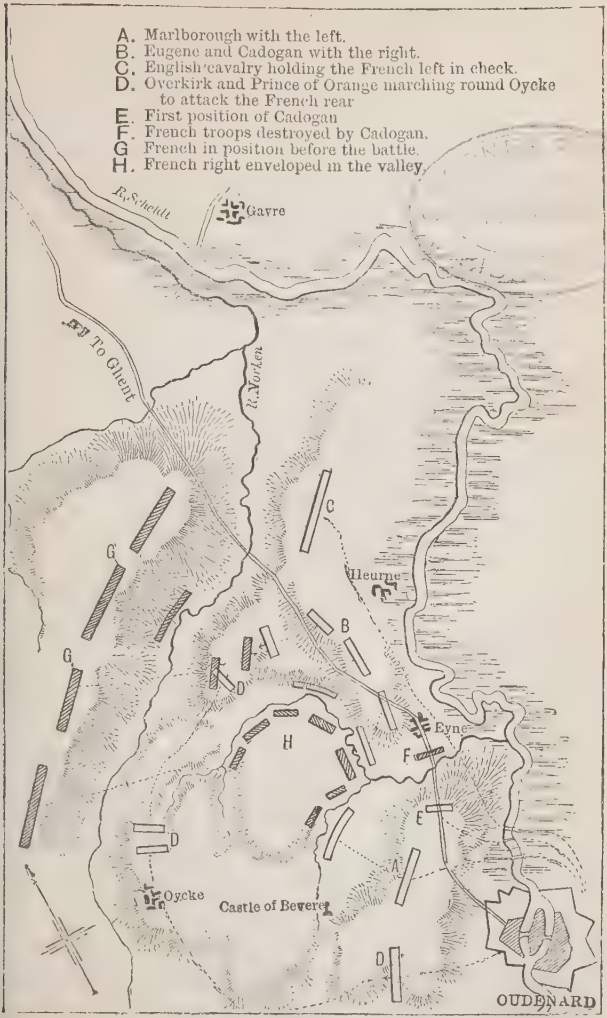
Precious time was wasted by indecision, and Marlborough knew how to use his enemy's mistakes. He and Prince Eugene actively superintended the crossing of the river; some of the cavalry were sent over through Oudenarde to save time, and the left column was able to form in front of the little village of Bevere. Cadogan, with the advanced guard, was not idle; by some mistake a body of French troops had been posted in an advanced position at Eyne, where they could get no support from the main army; Cadogan advanced, attacked them, and drove them back over the Norken.

This repulse filled the main body of the French army with desire to fight. Vendome saw that if they remained quiet the enemy, weary from a fifteen miles' march, would not dare to attack them, and they might retire in the night. But the Duke of Burgundy and the chief officers were too impatient to listen to anything, and the moment seemed favourable. It was already four in the afternoon, and the Allies had not yet formed after crossing the river. The Duke of Burgundy would not take advice from Vendome even as to the position of the troops, and an hour was wasted in useless marching. This gave the Allies time to form. Marlborough judged that the enemy meant first to attack, with their right, a small body of troops which were posted in the hedges round Groeneveld; he rapidly ordered other troops to advance to support them. He then made his final arrangements. Out of compliment he gave Eugene the command of the right, which consisted of by far the larger part of the army, mostly English troops, and himself commanded in the centre. The fighting began round Groeneveld, as he expected. The enemy attacked before reinforcements had arrived; but the English fought bravely, and held their ground till help came, and they were able to attack the enemy's centre. The troops, divided by the rivulets and hedges, fought in small bodies, struggling for each inch of ground, and the roar of the muskets never ceased.

Eugene, too, had attacked and broken the enemy's front; and the Prussian general, Natzmer, made a bold charge upon the second line whilst the enemy was still in disorder. He pressed on till the heavy fire of the French, who were sheltered on every side behind the hedges, mowed down his soldiers; the fighting was so close that he himself received several sabre cuts, and lost half his men.

Marlborough, meanwhile pressing onwards slowly noticed that the enemy had neglected to occupy the high ground above their right. He saw that it might be possible to turn their right, and this task he entrusted to the aged Dutch general Overkirk. Overkirk was not afraid of a hard task; he led his troops on rapidly and took up a position in front of the mill of Oycke. Then Marlborough sent a message begging them to attack the enemy in the rear, and the young Prince of Orange rushed down with the infantry from the height upon the French; some Danish cavalry supported him, and they fell upon the famous household cavalry of the French. Darkness was gathering, and the French were dismayed to find themselves thus attacked at their rear. Their dragoons fought bravely, hoping to save the infantry, but were cut to pieces themselves, and the greater part of seven regiments were either killed or taken.

Eugene and Marlborough, too, had managed to press on, so that the French were hemmed in on


A. Marlborough with the left.
B. Eugene and Cadogan with the right.
C. English cavalry holding the French left in check.
D. Overkirk and Prince of Orange marching round Oycke to attack the French rear
E. First position of Cadogan
F. French troops destroyed by Cadogan.
G. French in position before the battle.
H. French right enveloped in the valley.
R. Scheldt
Gavre
To Ghent
R. Norken
Heurne
Eyne
Oycke
Castle of Bevere
OUDENARD

all sides. Vendome got off his horse, and putting himself at the head of the infantry, made a last attempt to save the army. But he could do nothing. The men had lost heart; they remembered Marlborough's former victories, and saw that that day would add another to the number; the broken ground made any vigorous joint-action impossible, and as night drew on the French were more and more closely surrounded by the enemy. At length the right of Eugene and the left of the Prince of Orange met, and mistaking one another for enemies continued their fire, till the vigorous exertions of the generals at last stopped this struggle between friends. At nine it was found necessary to bid the troops halt as they stood, since they could no longer tell friend from foe. In the darkness the French managed to escape. Some slipped through a gap in the ranks of the Allies near Bevere, and fled to the French frontier. Eugene managed to take many prisoners by ordering his drummers to beat the French retreat, and getting some refugee French officers to sound the French rallying words.

The right wing of the French was destroyed; but the left might still have retired in good order had the Duke of Burgundy and the generals listened to Vendome. But panic had spread through the army; Vendome could find none to listen to him, and had to give the word of retreat. A confused flight towards Ghent began at once, and only with the greatest difficulty could Ven-

dome keep a few troops together to cover the retreat.

The Allies waited on the battle-field till morning dawned, and then Marlborough sent troops to pursue the retreating French, whilst he employed others to search out the wounded who were still alive amongst the heaps of dead on the battle-field. The French lost fifteen thousand killed, wounded, and prisoners in this battle; the loss of the Allies was three thousand. Marlborough's letters to England do not show the same exultation as after his former victories. Ill health and the thought of party troubles at home oppressed him. He only hoped that the victory might serve to make the Government more popular. He writes to Godolphin by Lord Stair:

"I must ever acknowledge the goodness of God in the success He was pleased to give us; for I believe Lord Stair will tell you they were in as strong a post as is possible to be found; but you know when I left England I was positively resolved to endeavour by all means to win a battle, thinking nothing else would make the Queen's business go on well. This reason only made me venture the battle yesterday, otherwise I did give them too much advantage; but the good of the Queen and my country shall always be preferred by me before any personal concern; for I am very sensible, if I had miscarried I should have been blamed. I hope I have given such a blow to their foot that they will not be able

to fight any more this year. My head aches so terribly that I must say no more."

In another letter he deplores that they had not two more hours of daylight, in which case they might have put an end to the war.

After the battle no time was wasted in idleness by the Allies. Prince Eugene went to meet his army, which was at last drawing near to Brussels. The Duke of Berwick was known to be marching from the Moselle to reinforce the French, and Marlborough was anxious to be ready to meet him. He managed therefore to break through the lines, which the enemy had made to cover the country between the Lys and the Scheldt, just before Berwick came up. He then fixed his head-quarters at Werwick, and spread his army out along the Lys. The French frontier now lay open before him, and he was anxious to press forward into the very heart of France; whilst at the same time an expedition was to sail from England to act on the French coast. But this scheme was thought far too bold by the Dutch, and even by Prince Eugene. It was thought that first some of the great French border fortresses should be taken, and arrangements were made to besiege Lille. Marlborough was much hampered by the difficulty of getting artillery. The French holding Ghent commanded both the Lys and the Scheldt, which join at Ghent, and so artillery could not be sent by water to the Allies from Holland. It was impossible to recapture Ghent;

for the French army was encamped in an impregnable position behind the canal which goes from Ghent to Bruges. They showed no desire to risk another battle, and felt confident that, owing to the want of artillery, the Allies would be able to do nothing further that year. On the other hand, most extravagant expectations were cherished in England as to the consequences of the battle of Oudenarde. People could not understand Marlborough's difficulties, and he spoke bitterly in his letters of the way in which fault was found, saying that he saw he would be blamed if impossibilities were not done.

When it became known that the Allies intended to besiege Lille, the French treated the idea with scorn. The town had been taken by Lewis XIV. in 1667, and Vauban had fortified it with extensive works. Vauban was dead; but he had himself drawn up a scheme for the defence of Lille, which he had left to his nephew, a skilful engineer, who now hastened to superintend the defence. Marshal Boufflers, the governor of French Flanders, had the command of troops amounting to nearly fifteen thousand, who were to defend the town. The siege did indeed seem an enterprise of tremendous difficulty, more especially as the position of the French army near Ghent prevented any communication with Holland by water. Artillery and ammunition had been collected for the Allies at Brussels, which would have to be brought them by land, through a country full of hostile

troops. All the skill of Marlborough and Eugene was exerted to protect the convoy, whilst the French were equally anxious to attack and destroy it.

The train of cannon and ammunition, fifteen miles in length, left Brussels on the 6th August, and Eugene followed with his army to protect it, whilst Marlborough sent troops as far as Oudenarde to meet it. So perfect were the arrangements that though Berwick hovered about with an army impatient to attack it, he found it impossible to do so. The convoy arrived in safety without the loss of a single waggon. The French themselves were amazed at the skill of their enemies.

Lille was now regularly invested. Prince Eugene was to direct the siege, whilst Marlborough commanded the covering army at Helchin. Here he could protect the convoys of stores which came from Holland, and could make it more difficult for Berwick, who was near Mons with his army, to join Vendome, who still stayed near Ghent. All Europe watched the siege with intense interest; many people came to the camp of the Allies that they might see for themselves the wonderful things that Marlborough and Eugene were doing. Some of the military geniuses of the next generation here took lessons from the two great generals. Little Maurice, the natural son of Augustus, the dethroned King of Poland, then a boy of twelve, escaped from his tutor at Dresden, and ran away on foot to join his father, who had gone to Eugene's

camp. The boy grew up to be himself a famous general, as Marshal Saxe.

Eugene opened the attack on the night of the 22nd of August; Marlborough at the same time crossed the Scheldt with his army, and advanced a little nearer to Lille. Vendome was determined to relieve Lille by a battle; he meant first to join Berwick, and then, with an army considerably superior to that of the Allies, to oblige them to raise the siege. After some delay the two French generals broke up their camps, and joining together at Lessines, crossed the Scheldt at Tournay, and advanced to the South of Lille. Marlborough had marched to meet them, and had taken up a strong position near Peronne, hoping for a battle which he thought might end the war.

Vendome was eager to attack him in the face of all difficulties; but Berwick was more cautious; and they waited while a messenger was sent to Versailles for instructions. Orders came back to fight; but after a heavy cannonade they withdrew, judging Marlborough's position impregnable. Again a messenger was sent to Versailles, and again orders came back to risk a battle; but it was now too late. It was clear that Lille could not be relieved by a battle, and the French withdrew, hoping to make the position of the Allies untenable by intercepting their stores.

Meanwhile the siege was progressing but slowly; and Marlborough writes that when after the French army had withdrawn he was again able to visit it,

it gave him the spleen to find things in such a bad way. He complained much of the manner in which the engineers had managed affairs, and was horrified to find how nearly the stores of powder, which it had been thought would be enough to take both the town and the citadel, were exhausted. His remonstrances filled the besiegers with more energy. A terrible attack was made on the 20th of September, led by Prince Eugene in person, who exposed himself with the utmost bravery, and cheered on the retreating soldiers when they were driven back by the terrible fire from within. Two thousand of the allied troops were slaughtered in this attack, but they succeeded in establishing themselves in a more advanced position. Prince Eugene himself was wounded by a spent musket-ball, which grazed his forehead and knocked off his hat. The wound was not dangerous; but when Marlborough visited him the next day he persuaded Eugene to stay quiet till it was quite cured, and promised meanwhile to direct the siege himself. He had to ride daily backwards and forwards between his own camp and the siege, so that as he writes, "With the vexation of its going so ill I am almost dead." He found the stores of ammunition even lower than he had supposed; for the engineers had deceived Eugene as to the amount, and there was only enough left for four days. The enemy were masters of the communications with Brussels, and Ostend was the only place from which it would be possible to draw supplies.

The troops which, under General Erle, had been ordered to make a descent upon the French coast had failed to do anything, and now, in obedience to Marlborough's wishes, landed at Ostend, that Erle might watch over the sending of supplies to the army.

A large convoy started from Ostend on September 27th. Vendome sent a considerable force to attack it; but Marlborough made the most careful preparations for its defence, and sent various bodies of troops to watch over its progress. The French, trusting in superior numbers, determined to intercept it in the wood of Wynendal, through which it had to pass. But the English general, Webb, so cleverly posted his men among the trees and the brushwood, that the French, on opening the attack, were assailed with a terrible fire. After thrice trying to advance they fled in terror, and no threats could persuade them to advance again, though their numbers were superior; they were beginning to look upon the English as invincible, and had lost their old confidence in themselves. The convoy reached Lille in safety, to the great relief of Marlborough and Eugene. "Webb and Cadogan," wrote Marlborough to Godolphin, "have on this occasion, as they will always do, behaved themselves extremely well." Unfortunately this success of Webb gave rise to a good deal of party animosity. By some mistake the *London Gazette*, in giving an account of the battle, spoke of its successful result as being due to Cadogan, not

Webb. Webb was a Tory, and his friends thought this mistake was Marlborough's doing. Webb left the army in disgust; and though Marlborough in his letters to England did his utmost to rectify the mistake, and warmly recommended Webb for promotion, the Tories still made it a matter for complaint against him.

The stores of powder in Lille itself were getting low, and the French made a desperate effort to send more into the town. A body of dragoons, carrying bags of powder, tried to force their way through the lines of the Allies. The attempt was discovered and the alarm given; they were attacked, and some sixty of them were blown up with the shot striking their powder-bags. The rest in terror threw away their powder and fled; only about three hundred got into Lille. Though the new stores enabled the siege to proceed with vigour, the advance was but slow. In England, people began to grow impatient. A contemporary letter says, "We have had a tedious expectation of the success of the siege of Lille; the country-people begin to think there is no such thing, and say the newspapers talk of it to make people bear paying taxes a year longer." Marlborough's letters are full of the difficulties of obtaining bread for his army and fodder for the horses. The difficulty of obtaining ammunition increased; for the French opened the sluices and laid a great part of the country between Ostend and Lille under water. The Allies had to resort to new expedients. The

powder was packed in skins, and carried part of the way in flat-bottomed boats and part by carriages mounted on high wheels. Cadogan, with great spirit and energy, protected the convoys, and beat back the numberless attacks of the enemy. The Allies had at this time a sad loss in the death of the brave old Dutch general, Overkirk, who died at Marlborough's camp at Rousselaer, at the age of sixty-seven, worn out with his many fatigues and exertions. Marlborough begged the Queen to bestow a pension upon his son as a reward for his services.

Vendome now tried, by fitting out boats, to prevent the convoy of ammunition on the canals. The French also succeeded in taking Leffinghen, an important post of the Allies, between Ostend and Lille, and capturing a large quantity of powder. But at that very moment success at last crowned the endeavours of the Allies. The besiegers had pressed closely round Lille; they had taken one by one all the external works, their artillery was mounted upon the out-works, and under a tremendous fire they prepared for the final assault. Then, on the 22nd October, Boufflers beat a parley, and the terms of surrender were discussed. Eugene, full of admiration for their brave defence, allowed the French to make their own terms. After a siege of sixty days the Allies entered the city, and Boufflers and the garrison were allowed to retire into the citadel, to which the Allies laid siege.

Divided councils had prevented the French from making any vigorous attempt to raise the siege. What Vendome proposed, Berwick opposed, and so nothing was done. Orders now came from Versailles not to risk a battle. But the French were busy drawing more troops from the Rhine, under the Elector of Bavaria, who determined to besiege Brussels, and take it before Marlborough could come to its defence. He hoped to terrify the governor into instant submission; but he held firm, and sent repeated messengers to Marlborough telling him of his danger.

To get at Brussels Marlborough had to cross the Scheldt, the whole line of which had been fortified. To cross this broad and deep river, with its steep banks, seemed an impossible feat in the face of the fortified posts of the enemy. But Marlborough managed to lull them into security, by making them believe that he was going to encamp near Menin till the citadel of Lille was taken. Meanwhile he silently prepared to cross the Scheldt in three places. The enemy were quite unprepared, and a thick fog hid the approach of the Allies till the last moment. Eugene was present to aid in the operations. The French round Oudenarde were driven back, the Allies crossed in safety and met together on the heights above Oudenarde; then Eugene went back to the siege of the citadel. The Elector of Bavaria was so terrified when he heard that Marlborough had crossed the Scheldt that he raised the siege of

Brussels at once, and retired precipitately, not waiting even to carry off his wounded or his cannon.

On the 9th December the citadel of Lille at last capitulated; the garrison was allowed to march out with all the honours of war. At last the long and difficult siege, which had seen such splendid instances of valour on both sides, came to an end. It had cost the Allies fourteen thousand men, and the garrison had lost eight thousand. Boufflers and his gallant soldiers were at the end living upon horse-flesh in the citadel.

The winter had now set in. The French were deeply discouraged by the severe losses they had met with, and Lewis XIV., thinking that the Allies would attempt nothing more that year, ordered his generals to strengthen the garrisons of Ghent and Bruges, and settle their troops into winter quarters, much to Vendome's disgust, who chafed under these orders, and longed to be allowed to do something to retrieve his fame. Marlborough was determined to capture Ghent and Bruges before returning to England, and steps were at once taken to besiege Ghent, though the frost was so severe that at first it was impossible to dig the trenches. The frost was followed by a fog, and Marlborough, who was then in his fifty-ninth year, suffered greatly from the cold and exposure in the trenches. On January 2nd the town surrendered, and the garrison marched out with full honours of war past Marlborough and Eugene

and the staff. The file was so long that the march lasted from ten in the morning till six in the evening. Immediately afterwards the French evacuated Bruges, Plassendael, and Leffinghen, and the Allies were once more masters of Brabant.

Whilst Marlborough and Eugene had won these glorious successes in the Netherlands, nothing important had been done elsewhere. The Allies had some trifling successes in Spain. In Germany, the Elector of Hanover had done nothing, but had sulked in angry jealousy at seeing the march of Eugene's army to the Netherlands and the great things that had been done in consequence.

CHAPTER XIII.

Malplaquet.

LATE though the campaign had lasted, Marlborough was not able, even when it was at an end, to go back to England. Now that Lille, the great fortress which guarded the Northern frontier of France, was in the hands of the Allies, and the road to Paris seemed to lie open to their conquering armies, it was to be expected that the French would make a great effort in the Netherlands during the next campaign to keep the Allies from entering France. Marlborough wished that on their side they should do all they could to be prepared to meet them, that a few more crushing blows might bring down the pride of Lewis XIV. so low that a really sure and lasting peace could be concluded. The Emperor consented that Prince Eugene's army should remain in the Netherlands during the next campaign; and Marlborough exerted himself to persuade the English Government to grant supplies which would enable him to reinforce his army. Towards the end of January Eugene went off to Vienna to settle matters with

his Court. Marlborough, at the request of the Emperor and the States General, remained in Holland to look after the troops till Eugene could return and take his place. He wished also to watch the course events were taking. Lewis XIV. was once more holding out tantalising offers of a separate peace to the Dutch. This made Marlborough uneasy, and anxious to be on the spot to see what was going on. He knew also that he was regarded with suspicion and distrust by many amongst the Dutch. After the victory of Oudenarde, Charles of Austria had repeated his offer of the government of the Spanish Netherlands to Marlborough; and it is clear that Marlborough would gladly have accepted so important a position, to which also a large salary was attached, which must have had great attractions to so avaricious a man. But the Dutch were entirely opposed to the proposal, and Marlborough knew that it would be impossible to accept it in their present temper. Still he had not definitely refused, and this kept alive the jealousy of the Dutch.

At last, in the beginning of March, Marlborough was able to return to England for a few weeks. The state of things there did not tend to give him peace of mind. It was just then that the Whigs had at last triumphed over all the scruples and hesitations of the Queen, and filled all the chief places in the Government. Anne, who was discontented and out of spirits at the death of her

husband, vented her displeasure upon Godolphin, and was cold and stiff even with Marlborough. On the other hand, the Whigs did not feel sure of Marlborough and Godolphin; they treated them with suspicion, and were always making new demands upon the unhappy Treasurer, so that in the beginning of January he had written to Marlborough: "The life of a slave in the galleys is paradise in comparison of mine." The Duchess too was out of temper with her old friends the Whigs, who did not treat her with the consideration she thought she deserved; and still more out of temper at the growing favour shown by the Queen to her rival Mrs. Masham. Altogether, Marlborough's few weeks' holiday cannot have given him any pleasure. The triumph of the Whigs had not diminished the bitterness of party strife. Parliament was with them, but amongst the people a weariness of the war was beginning to be felt. The burdens of taxation pressed heavily upon them. The French privateers interfered with English commerce; and, besides money losses, people murmured over the want of those luxuries with which commerce had formerly supplied them. They no longer cared so much about Marlborough's victories; and the old murmurs were raised that the great General was prolonging the war for his own interests.

In France the winter had brought terrible suffering with it. The people were utterly impoverished by the long and ruinous wars of their

magnificent King. There was a scarcity of everything, above all of bread; even the fine ladies at Paris were forced to eat black bread. An exceptionally severe winter increased the sufferings of the people; all the rivers were frozen over, and the half-starved, half-clad peasants were in no condition to bear the bitter cold. Whilst the people suffered, officials grew rich on their misery; corn was bought up by monopolists and only sold again at exorbitant prices. Official mismanagement and jobbery increased tenfold the burdens of the war. Brigands infested the roads, and misery would have driven the people to revolt had they not been restrained by military force. Famished, they crowded round the gilded gates of Versailles, clamouring for bread. Under these circumstances Lewis XIV. at last determined, as he puts it himself, "to forget his glory" and make proposals for peace. M. Rouillé was sent to Holland to confer with Heinsius. As soon as this was known both Marlborough and Eugene hastened to the Hague, so that the Dutch might not be led into any separate agreement with France.

It was found that the concessions proposed by Rouillé on the part of the French King were not nearly sufficient to satisfy the Allies. Rouillé sent to Paris for more instructions, and meanwhile Marlborough and Heinsius discussed together the terms on which peace could be accepted. As soon as they heard any talk of peace, the other Allies

hurried to send in their demands, and of course each only thought of what they wanted for themselves. The Dutch cared for nothing but their barrier, and on this point their demands grew more and more exorbitant. The Whig Government at home had furnished Marlborough with a list of the conditions upon which the English would be inclined to make peace. The terms were hard, for they included the cession of the entire kingdom of Spain to Austria within two months, and the rasure of Dunkirk, the place from which the French privateers sailed to prey upon English commerce. Heinsius believed it impossible that the French would accept such terms, but Marlborough declared that England would agree to nothing less, and Eugene's demands were equally exorbitant. Both Eugene and Marlborough so entirely distrusted the French King, that they believed that nothing but the most crushing terms would really humble him, and save Europe from his encroachments. The Whigs too went even further than Marlborough himself. The war was a Whig war, its success had produced the triumph of the Whigs, they were in no hurry to see it come to an end, unless they could procure a peace so glorious as to strengthen and increase their power. Hence party considerations in England influenced these negotiations, more than any wise consideration what would be for the real good of the English people. On the other hand the Court of Vienna, which had borne none of the costs of the war, wished to reap

its full advantages. If they could not get all they wanted now, the war might as well go on, since Holland and England bore all the expense of it; they had nothing to lose, and possibly a great deal to gain by its continuance. Their grasping ambition knew no bounds, and though the whole war had sprung from the necessity of preserving the balance of power in Europe against the preponderance of the House of Bourbon, no fear was shown lest the scale should weigh down too heavily on the other side, and the House of Austria gain that preponderance which had been snatched from France. Probably the other Allies had little fear, knowing as they did the incapacity of the House of Austria.

Under these circumstances Rouillé despaired of bringing the negotiations to any conclusion. He returned to Versailles with the terms offered by the Allies, and Marlborough went over to England to discuss the state of affairs once more with the Government. The news brought by Rouillé filled Lewis XIV. and his ministers with despair; a contemporary manuscript speaks of the scene in the French Cabinet as so sad that it would be difficult to describe it. At last Torcy, Lewis's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, rose up and offered to go himself to the Hague, to see whether it would not be possible to get peace on more easy terms, or at least to prolong the negotiations, and, by the prospect of peace, keep the Allies from preparing vigorously for another campaign. Lewis

gratefully accepted his offer, and he set off at once with the passport of a common courier, without waiting for a safe conduct.

Torcy reached the Hague on the evening of the 6th May. He passed through Rotterdam on his way, and his banker, accompanying him thence, led him straight to the house of Heinsius, who was amazed on learning who his visitor was, while Torcy was equally amazed at seeing the way in which the head of the government of the States General lived; he writes in his report that his establishment consisted but of one secretary, one coachman, one manservant, and one maid. Torcy was delighted to discover that Marlborough and Eugene had not yet come back. He hoped to work upon the self-interest of the Dutch, and by offering them all that they could want for themselves, persuade them to break with the Allies. However, nothing was to be made out of Heinsius. He was cold and unbending in his manner, earnestly desirous for the good of his country, but firmly determined to stand by the rest of the Allies. It was hardly to be expected that he should personally feel much cordiality for the French, for when at the time of the Peace of Nimeguen he had visited Paris to negotiate terms, and had warmly opposed Colbert in discussion, Colbert had gone so far as to threaten to imprison him in the Bastile. Torcy felt that it was quite useless to try and work upon the personal feelings of this stern and determined man. He hoped

to be more fortunate with Marlborough, of whose morality the French had no high opinion, and whom Torcy, according to the instructions of his Court, was to try and bribe by the promise of large sums of money to get more easy terms for France.

Marlborough came back to the Hague on the 18th of May accompanied by Lord Townshend, a distinguished Whig, who had been sent with him as joint plenipotentiary to arrange the terms of peace. Torcy at once visited him, and was received with the Duke's usual courtesy. In him there was no coldness nor sternness, and Torcy was led to hope that there might also be no political morality. The Duke was warm in his expressions of regard for Lewis XIV., and spoke of his earnest wish for peace. But he told Torcy that the English Government was firmly decided as to the terms on which peace could be made, and that Townshend had accompanied him as a security that nothing less should be accepted. Marlborough's desire apparently was to appear personally willing to do anything in his power to serve Lewis XIV., but at the same time to make it clear that he was so tied by instructions from home, that he could do nothing of his own accord. Parliament had in truth passed a resolution that no peace should be concluded, unless Lewis XIV. consented to demolish Dunkirk, that nest of pirates, to recognise the Protestant Succession, and banish the Stuarts from France. When Torcy spoke of the Stuarts, Marlborough

expressed his earnest desire to be of any service that he could to James Edward, as the child of the King for whom he would once have been ready to lay down his life. Here we see his old desire to be on good terms with all parties. It could never be certain that the Pretender might not be called to the English throne; Marlborough wished at least to try and stand well with him, that in such an event he might declare that he had only been compelled by the force of circumstances to oppose him before. But when Torcy vaguely hinted at a bribe, Marlborough blushed and turned the conversation, and Torcy was convinced that he could not be bought, as Lewis XIV. had bought so many others.

Torcy tried the envoys of each of the Allies separately; to the Dutch, to the English, to the Austrians, in turn he offered all that each individually could want, hoping to disturb the understanding that existed between them, and to dispose at least one of them to make peace. But the Allies remained true to one another, and Torcy only managed to deepen their belief in Lewis XIV.'s insincerity by the way in which he prolonged the negotiations. The demands of the Allies meanwhile increased daily. They demanded the cession of such towns as would secure the frontiers of Holland, Germany, and Savoy, the demolition of Dunkirk, and the recognition of the Protestant Succession in England. Lewis XIV. was to withdraw all support from his grandson in Spain, and

acknowledge the rights of the House of Austria to the entire kingdom of Spain; if after a two months' truce Philip refused to withdraw from Spain, Lewis XIV. was to help the Allies to turn him out. These and various other minor demands were drawn up as the preliminaries of peace, and were signed by the English, Dutch, and Austrian plenipotentiaries. Torcy in vain pleaded for some portion of the Spanish dominions which might be made into a kingdom for Philip; but when he saw that the Allies would relax nothing from their demands, he at last appeared willing to accept the preliminaries, only saying that he could not sign them without permission from Lewis XIV. He therefore set off for Paris, leaving Rouillé behind, who was to sign the preliminaries as soon as instructions came from Paris.

Marlborough seems to have been full of hope that peace would be concluded; he even began arrangements with Godolphin for the return of the English troops. But Torcy probably knew well that Lewis XIV. would never consent to such terms, and had only affected to accept them for the sake of gaining time. When he reached Versailles a council was summoned to consider the preliminaries. There was no hesitation in declaring that, humbled though France was, it was impossible to accept them. For even if they were accepted they would not bring peace, only a truce for two months, after which Lewis XIV.

would be obliged to help in making war upon his own grandson; for it was hardly to be expected that Philip, who had now entirely gained the love of the Spaniards, would give up his kingdom at his grandfather's bidding. "If I must wage war," said Lewis XIV., "I would rather wage it against my enemies than against my children." A messenger was at once, on the 2nd June, sent off to Rouillé, bidding him return to France after telling Heinsius that Lewis XIV. rejected the preliminaries. We cannot wonder at this conclusion, for without doubt the terms of the Allies were harsh and exorbitant. In these negotiations Lewis XIV. reaped the fruit of his former insincerity and disregard of treaties. No one would trust him, they felt that he must be utterly humbled, or else he might become dangerous again. It was this feeling, and the grasping spirit of Austria, that provoked the Allies to make such exorbitant demands. After the failure of the negotiations the Dutch urgently demanded the conclusion of a Barrier Treaty between themselves and England, which would determine the concessions to be made to them when peace was finally concluded. Marlborough thought their demands exorbitant, and was afraid that, once sure of all they wanted, they would desert the cause of the Allies. But Godolphin pressed the conclusion of the treaty; and as Marlborough refused to give it the authority of his name, it was at last signed by Townshend alone.

Marlborough was loudly accused by his opponents, both at the time and afterwards, of prolonging the war for his own interests. They said that his love for money made him hesitate to give up the large salary which he enjoyed as Captain-General. On the other hand, his private letters to his wife and to Godolphin tell a very different tale. He repeats, as we have seen continually, his longing for peace, that he may be able to spend his time quietly with his wife and friends. He always speaks of his desire for a firm and lasting peace. Like Eugene, he profoundly distrusted Lewis XIV., and thought it necessary for the security of Europe to exact great concessions from him. The Whigs too were decidedly in favour of a continuance of the war for party reasons, and so once more a favourable opportunity of making peace was lost. Meanwhile the French were roused to new exertions, by the efforts of their enemies to humble them. Lewis XIV., at Torcy's advice, addressed a letter to the governors of the provinces, telling them his reasons for refusing to make peace. He bade them publish his letter, and call upon the people to make new sacrifices. The people responded bravely to this call. Hunger aided Lewis, and sent recruits to his armies, who hoped that in the field bread would be less scarce than at home. At Court there was a great show of patriotism—the King and the great lords sent their plate to be coined, and Madame de Maintenon and the other

ladies ostentatiously ate black bread. Lewis XIV. professed to share in all the sufferings which the war brought upon his people; but the same shameful mismanagement of the finances went on—the same monopolies were held by the great lords, who bought up the corn and speculated on the sufferings of the people. One important change was made; Villars was sent to take command of the French army. He was one of the most brilliant of the French generals, vain and extravagant in his conduct and speech but a hero in action. He knew both how to make wise plans and how to execute them. He was not like Vendome, who would rise from orgies of filthy self-indulgence to strike perchance a vigorous blow, or to find he had slept away the right moment. Villars was always on the alert; he had never lost a battle, and was much beloved by the soldiers. But when he reached the army on the frontier he was horrified at the condition in which he found it. The magazines were quite empty, the horses were dying from want of fodder, the men were half-starved and half-naked, and were selling even their arms for food. But there was plenty of courage in the men, and Villars did his utmost to arouse their spirit. He was constantly in the camp, and by kindly sympathy and inspiriting words restored their courage and increased his own popularity. "Only imagine," he wrote, "the horror to see an army in want of bread. To-day it was not delivered till the evening, and late in the evening

too. Yesterday, that I might supply the brigades which had to march, I was obliged to impose a fast on those that stood still." His army meanwhile increased till it numbered one hundred and ten thousand, about equal to the army of the Allies. "It is a marvel," wrote Villars, "how we subsist, and a still greater marvel is the patience with which our soldiers support the feeling of hunger."

The Allies were anxious to do something striking to appease those who murmured at the continuance of the war. They must either win a battle or take a town. Villars had entrenched himself in a strong position between Douai and the Lys, so that it was impossible to attack him. Marlborough managed, however, to make Villars believe that his object was to fight a battle, and when the French were entirely mystified as to his real intentions, he marched rapidly and silently to invest Tournai, one of the great frontier fortresses.

The governor of Tournai was quite unprepared for a siege; some of his garrison were absent collecting cattle, many of the officers were away, and the town was poorly provisioned. Still it had been so strongly fortified by the skill of Vauban, that Villars hoped the siege would occupy the whole campaign. The investment of the city began on the 3rd of July, and on the 7th the trenches were opened. The heavy rains which had hindered the movements of the troops at the beginning of the campaign still went on; but the

Allies managed slowly to advance. Villars meanwhile did all he could to harass them by sending out parties to impede their supplies; but Eugene, who commanded the covering army whilst Marlborough directed the siege, so posted his army that Villars was no longer able to interfere with the besiegers. Tournai possessed a fine cathedral, and orders were given by Marlborough that great care should be taken that no harm was done to it by the fire from his artillery. After a siege of only twenty-one days the governor of Tournai capitulated, rather than await a general assault, and the garrison retired into the citadel.

The citadel was protected by many outworks, and by an elaborate series of mines, which made its attack very difficult and terribly dangerous. The struggle was in great part carried on underground. One party of miners met with another and engaged in desperate fights, and in the darkness friend was often mistaken for foe. Often the mines were blown up when filled with men; for in this ghastly labyrinth there were mines below mines. Once three hundred men were blown up or stifled in smoke by one explosion. Often men were buried alive, or drowned by the water that inundated the mines. When the miners of the Allies proved insufficient, it was only with the greatest difficulty that the bravest soldiers could be persuaded to engage in this terrible warfare, where they had to struggle with unseen foes, and could not know a moment's safety.

After about a month's siege the citadel capitulated, on the 3rd August, and this rich city, surrounded by peculiarly fertile country, and famous for its manufactures, fell into the hands of the Allies. It covered French Flanders, and so, from a military point of view, its possession was of great importance. Marlborough and Eugene next intended to besiege Mons, an important and strongly-fortified town which they knew to be poorly garrisoned and badly supplied with provisions. But to get at Mons they had to force the fortified lines of the French, which reached from behind Mons to the river Sambre; and if Villars once suspected their design it would be very easy for him to make the lines impassable. The greatest secrecy and diligence had therefore to be observed. Marlborough noted the weakest part of the enemy's lines, and sent at once a detachment of troops under the brave Prince of Hesse, who managed by a rapid march to take the enemy by surprise, and invest Mons on the south before the French could prevent him. As soon as Villars guessed what the Allies meant to do, he broke up his camp behind the lines of Douai and marched to prevent the investment of Mons. But heavy rains impeded the movements of the infantry; the Prince of Hesse was before him, and was soon followed by the rest of the Allies, and Villars' communication with Mons was cut off. He was determined to do all he could to save the place. The hostile armies were now close together,

and constant skirmishes took place with varying success between their advanced parties. New courage was given to the French army by the arrival of Marshal Boufflers, the brave defender of Lille, in their camp on the 7th September; though senior to Villars in rank, he came at this moment of peril to his country to serve under him. His devotion roused the enthusiasm of the soldiers, who were eagerly impatient to fight.

Villars, in hopes of recovering communication with Mons, and forcing the Allied army to move from its commanding position on the heights above the town, took up a strong position in an opening between two woods, near a little village called Malplaquet, opposite to the Allies. The ground sloped away in front of his camp, and was intersected by numerous little streams, with steep banks, so that his position was very difficult to attack, and he began at once to make it still stronger by throwing up fortifications. These fortifications were to be guarded by the infantry, whilst the cavalry was posted behind. The ground was cleared, as far as possible, of hedges and other obstacles, so as to enable the cavalry to act. The Allies were encamped below, at only a short distance, in full expectation of a battle. They were surprised at the rapidity with which Villars had fortified his position during the night, and Marlborough and Eugene decided, after much consultation with the other generals, and the usual opposition from the Dutch Deputies, that if the enemy

did not attack them, they would attack. Marlborough wished to do so at once, before Villars had time to fortify his position further; but Eugene thought it wiser to wait till some of the troops which were still on their way from Tournai should join them. The day was therefore spent in making preparations for the attack on the morrow, and orders were sent to hasten the coming of the troops from Tournai. General Withers, who was some way behind the rest, was bidden not to join the general army, but take up a position at a farm called La Folie, from whence he might attack the enemy's left, and perhaps turn their flank. The enemy were busy all day and through the night throwing up new works.

On the next morning, the 11th of September, a thick mist hid the two armies from one another. Already, at three o'clock, divine service was performed in the camp of the Allies, and afterwards, in the thick fog, their heavy guns were moved forward. Up till the last moment the French were working at their entrenchments; but now they laid down their spades, took up their arms, and awaited the attack in their appointed positions. They were full of enthusiasm, and greeted their general, as he rode along the ranks, with shouts of "Vive le Roi! vive le Maréchal de Villars!" At half-past seven the sun conquered the fog, and the cannonade begun. The Allied troops took up their several positions; they regarded the entrenchments of the French

with contempt and disgust, and exclaimed "that they were again obliged to fight against moles."

The first attack was made on the enemy's left, and the troops, encouraged by Prince Eugene, tried to penetrate into the wood of Taisniere, which was strongly defended by earthworks. Marlborough at the same time led the attack on the centre, and Withers advanced to attack the flank of the enemy's left from La Folie. The terrible fire of the French from behind their entrenchments beat back the Allies several times, but the gaps in the ranks were speedily filled up by their energetic leaders, and they were again led on to the attack. Half an hour after the battle had begun the young Prince of Orange, without waiting any longer for orders, led on in person his detachment against the enemy's right. His imprudent valour had terrible results. The frightful storm of shot that greeted him mowed down his men and killed his horse, but he pressed on on foot, and planted his colours on the entrenchment, calling his troops to follow him. The Dutch fought with desperate courage, but were again and again driven back. Two thousand men are said to have perished. Reinforcements were urgently demanded, and Marlborough and Eugene hurried to the spot to see with sadness the havoc wrought by the enemy's batteries. But the spirit of the Dutch did not fail, and the wounded men, after they had retired to have their wounds dressed, might be seen bravely returning to the fight.

The Allies had gained little with all their losses. On the right Eugene had only managed to advance to the other side of the wood of Taisniere. He had been wounded behind the ear, but refused even to have his wound dressed, saying, "If I am fated to die here, to what purpose can it be to dress the wound? If I survive it will be time enough in the evening." Villars was wounded more severely below the knee. He too refused to leave the field, and had himself carried in a chair till he fainted in an agony of pain, and had to be borne away.

The moment for which Marlborough had prepared was now come. Though the Allies had not advanced much either on the right or the left, they had pressed the enemy so sorely, that Villars on the left and Boufflers on the right had been obliged to draw all the infantry from the centre, to enable them to resist the onward progress of their enemy. The French cavalry in the centre therefore stood exposed, and a cannonade was opened upon them from the Allies' batteries, followed by an impetuous cavalry charge, led by the brave Prince of Auvergne. They met the splendid French gendarmerie; thrice they charged, and thrice were driven back; then they were reinforced by both Marlborough and Eugene with their cavalry, and this time the French could not resist their onset. The Prince of Orange too had taken advantage of this moment to renew his attack, and by a daring movement turned the

flank of the enemy's right. It was now three in the afternoon, and the battle had lasted since eight in the morning. Boufflers, who, since Villars had been carried away, held the supreme command, saw that further resistance was impossible. His centre was pierced, his right driven back from its entrenchments, and he was cut off from his left. With bitter sorrow he ordered a retreat, but it was no precipitate flight. The troops retreated slowly and in good order, and gradually reassembled at a camp between Quesnoy and Valenciennes. The Allies were too exhausted to think of pursuit, and encamped that night near the field of battle. They had won the victory, but at a frightful price; their killed and wounded numbered over eighteen thousand men, amongst whom were a great many officers and generals. The French on their side lost about fourteen thousand men. There was indeed some ground for Villars' boast in his despatch to the King, "The enemy would have been annihilated by such another victory." As Bolingbroke wrote many years afterwards, "A deluge of blood was spilt to dislodge them, for we did no more at Malplaquet."

It may well be questioned whether dislodging the enemy from their position was worth this price; and it is probable that Marlborough would never have fought this battle but for the state of political parties in England. His letters home show little exultation over the victory. He was depressed at the time by a quarrel with the

Duchess, who wished that he should remonstrate with the Queen for the way in which she treated her. Marlborough would not agree to do this, and the Duchess assailed him with bitter and violent reproaches. On the eve of the battle of Malplaquet he wrote sadly to her: "I can't hinder saying to you, that though the fate of Europe, if these armies engage, may depend upon the good or bad success, yet your uneasiness gives me much greater trouble." On the 11th September he adds a postscript: "I am so tired that I have but strength enough to tell you that we have had this day a very bloody battle; the first part of the day we beat their foot, and afterwards their horse. God Almighty be praised, it is now in our power to have what peace we please; and I may be pretty well assured of never being in another battle; but that nor nothing in this world can make me happy if you are not kind."

The number of wounded left on the field of battle was very great; the battle had been so fierce that little quarter was given, and the number of prisoners was small; most of those even were wounded. Marlborough learnt after the battle that numbers of the wounded French officers and soldiers had crept into the neighbouring houses or into the woods, and were in a miserable condition. He therefore sent to Marshal Villars to beg that a French officer should be allowed to meet Cadogan, to make arrangements for the sending of carts and waggons to take away the wounded French, on

condition that they would not serve again unless English soldiers were given up in exchange. Some three thousand wounded were rescued from a lingering death on the field of battle by the care of the Duke. His grief at the suffering which he saw and the fatigue of the battle told upon his health, and for a few days he was seriously unwell. A report got about amongst the French that he had been killed in the battle, and this gave rise to a popular song, "Malbrook s'en va-t-en guerre," which tells how the news of his death was taken home to his wife.

As soon as possible after the battle Mons was invested. Eugene directed the siege, whilst Marlborough with the covering army encamped at Havre. Convoys of artillery were safely received from Brussels, after some delay caused by violent rains, and on the 25th September the trenches were opened and the attack began. The siege was carried on with vigour, and the danger of Mons made the French eager to do all they could to save it; but they dared not attack the covering army in its strong position, and on the 20th of October Mons surrendered. After this success Marlborough determined to settle his troops in winter quarters. The harvest had been very bad, and it was most difficult to get forage, so it was thought impossible to do anything more that campaign. The winter was coming on; the heavy rains and a good deal of sickness in the army made Marlborough reluctantly give up his hopes

of besieging Maubeuge. But the capture of Lille, Mons, and Tournai gave entire security to the Spanish Netherlands. There was no need to fear another such surprise as that of Ghent and Bruges in the beginning of the last year. Besides this, the allied army need not now depend upon forage from Holland; they could send their foraging parties into France to get what they could from the wretched peasantry, whose sufferings were terrible. Marlborough wrote to the Duchess, July, 1709: "The misery of all the poor people we see is such that one must be a brute not to pity them." He always enforced strict discipline among his soldiers, and insisted on their paying for all they took.

In Germany and Spain the campaign of 1709 again was unproductive of any important results. But in Spain the peace negotiations had produced a great impression. The Spaniards were disgusted to see the readiness which Lewis XIV. showed to divide their monarchy; they were indignant that there should be any question of taking from them a king whom they had learnt to love; neither can we wonder that Philip should be indignant at the idea that he might be called upon at the bidding of his grandfather to resign his kingdom. The Spaniards saw that they must depend more upon themselves and less upon Lewis XIV.; for France had enough to do to defend herself. Philip IV. as he grew older had shown more spirit and energy, and had succeeded in gaining the love of

the Castilians and Andalusians. He declared that he would suffer anything, even death, rather than lay down his crown at the bidding of any one. The grandees gathered round him with enthusiasm, and Charles could maintain himself only in Catalonia.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Trial of Sacheverell.

THE state of things which Marlborough found on returning to England was not likely to increase his peace of mind. The disagreement between the Queen and the Duchess was greater than ever. In the spring of 1708 the Duchess, furious at the growing influence of Mrs. Masham, had threatened to retire from Court, and asked that the Queen would give the offices she held to her daughters. The Queen listened to her violent reproaches, mixed with passionate tears, with some confusion. She tried to put an end to the scene by saying, "You and I must never part;" but the Duchess insisted upon her promising that, in case she had to withdraw from Court, her offices should be given to her daughters. This promise she afterwards managed to get from the Queen in writing, but her importunate conduct was not likely to win back for her the Queen's favour. She was so mortified by the treatment she met with at Court that she at last decided to retire for a time to the country, and wrote to the Queen:

"Your Majesty will neither be surprised nor displeased to hear that I am gone into the country, since by your very hard and uncommon usage of me you have convinced all sorts of people, as well as myself, that nothing would be so uneasy to you as my near attendance." After the battle of Oudenarde the discord between the Queen and the Duchess broke out in a public quarrel. The Duchess, as Mistress of the Robes, had arranged the jewels which the Queen was to wear at the thanksgiving service for the victory. The Queen, for some reason or another, refused to wear the jewels selected by the Duchess, who at once put this down to Mrs. Masham's influence. As they were in the coach on the way to church she began to scold the Queen for her conduct, and even during the service whispered her reproaches in Anne's ear. When Anne wanted to answer she interrupted her, and bade her be silent lest they should be overheard. Not content with this outrageous conduct, she afterwards, when sending a letter from the Duke to the Queen, wrote with it a letter containing still more violent reproaches. The Queen's anger at this conduct was so great that she no longer sought to disguise it by kind words. She wrote to the Duchess: "After the commands you gave me in the church on the thanksgiving of not answering you, I should not have troubled you with these lines, but to return the Duke of Marlborough's letter safe into your hands." The Duchess could not be silenced, and

wrote still more rudely: "I should think myself wanting in my duty to you if I saw you so much in the wrong, as, without prejudice or passion, I think you are in several particulars, and did not tell you of it." The letter was followed by an interview, in which the Duchess grew so angry that the loud tones of her voice penetrated to the ante-room. She came out with eyes bathed in tears, and the Queen was found also weeping. The Duchess could not let the matter rest, though Marlborough wrote to her that he wished she would see "that the Queen is not capable of being changed by reason, so that you must be quiet till the time comes in which she must change." The Duchess did at last take the resolution of neither speaking, nor writing any more to the Queen, and for a few weeks there was no intercourse between them. The death of the Prince of Denmark again brought them together in apparent friendship. The Duchess hurried up to Kensington from Windsor as soon as she heard of the Prince's danger. She was present at his death, led the Queen away from his death-bed, and knelt by her in her closet, trying to soothe the violence of her grief. She then persuaded Anne to move to St. James's Palace for a change of scene, and the Queen agreed, but much offended the Duchess by giving her her watch, and bidding her withdraw till the hand had reached a certain point, and meanwhile send Mrs. Masham to her. The Duchess went, but would not send for Mrs. Masham, as she did not

like to give such a sign of her rival's favour before the crowd in the ante-chamber. The Queen however managed to send a message to Mrs. Masham to join her at St. James's, whither the Duchess now conducted her. Anne's grief was easily diverted by the business of arranging the small details of the funeral. The Duchess wrote some years after: "Her love to the Prince seemed in the eyes of the world to be prodigiously great; and great as was the passion of her grief, her stomach was greater, for that very day he died she eat three very large and hearty meals, so that one would think that as other persons' grief takes away their appetites, her appetite took away her grief. Nor was it less remarkable where there was so great an appearance of love—the peculiar pleasure she took before his funeral in settling the order of it, and naming the persons that were to attend, and placing them according to their rank and the rules of precedence, which was the entertainment she gave herself every day till that solemnity was over." Anne sent a note to the Duchess the very evening after the Prince's death, begging her to tell the Lord Treasurer to "see that there may be a great many yeomen of the guards to carry the Prince's dear body, that it may not be let fall, the great stairs being very steep and slippery."

This renewal of intercourse between the Queen and the Duchess came to nothing, for the Duchess only obtained new proofs of Mrs. Masham's favour: she always found her either with the Queen, or

just leaving the room. In fact things did not go well with the Duchess in those days; she had lost the Queen's favour, and she was beginning to quarrel with her friends the Whigs too. The Whigs had been ready to court her when they hoped to make her of use, but now that they were in power, they adopted a more haughty tone both to Godolphin and the Duchess. They demanded as rights what they had before sued for as favours. The Duchess, deeply offended at the tone of the Whigs, abused them in her letters to the Duke as violently as she had before abused the Tories, bitterly declared her intention of having no more to do with party politics, and accused the Whigs of intriguing with Harley and Mrs. Masham. Marlborough was appealed to by the Queen, Godolphin, and the Duchess, in all their difficulties. Convinced that now he could hope for nothing from the Tories, he wished to work in entire concord with the Whigs, and was disappointed to find that they still looked upon both him and the Treasurer with suspicion. The Duchess's conduct only increased his uneasiness; even if she did not seek to see the Queen, she could not refrain from writing angry letters to her, reproaching her for her fondness for Mrs. Masham, and her supposed intercourse with Harley. In vain the Duke urged upon her to let the matter rest. "Be obliging and kind to all your friends," he wrote, "and avoid entering into cabals." But this was just what the Duchess could not do.

Each mark of her loss of the Queen's favour was only the occasion of more violent letters. On one occasion she sent her a long letter full of extracts from *The Whole Duty of Man*, and from the Prayer Book and Bishop Taylor's works, reminding her that none could conscientiously partake of the Lord's Supper unless they were at peace and in charity with all mankind. When the Duchess, many years afterwards, published the justification of herself, which she called her "*Conduct*," she said of this letter, "Nor had my papers any apparent effect on her Majesty, except that, after my coming to town, as she was passing by me in order to receive the Communion, she looked with much good nature, and very graciously smiled upon me. But the smile and pleasant look, I had reason afterwards to think, were given to Bishop Taylor and the Common Prayer Book, and not to me." The Queen, worried past endurance by the Duchess's tempers and scoldings, leant more and more upon Mrs. Masham, and through Mrs. Masham Harley found a way of access to her. He had a passion for mystery and intriguing. As St. John said of him, in days long after, when both were again out of power, "No man was more desirous of power, and he had a competent share of cunning to wriggle himself into it; but then his part was over, and no man was more at a loss how to employ it." Harley was now in his element; he had the ear of the Queen, who clung to him on account of his High

Church views, whilst she hated the Whigs because she looked upon them as latitudinarians. Mrs. Masham was always at hand to introduce him up a back-stair into the Queen's presence, or to carry messages between the two. But as most of the servants about the Court owed their places to the Duchess of Marlborough, the Queen feared lest they should act as spies upon her, and chose at this time often to live in a small house at Windsor rather than in the Castle, so that she might safely carry on her intercourse with Harley. She chafed at the bondage in which she was held by the Marlboroughs and the Whigs, and without courage to break the bonds herself, listened with pleasure to the plans and suggestions of Harley.

The suspicion of all this intriguing, and the knowledge that he no longer enjoyed the Queen's favour so entirely as formerly, made Marlborough anxious to attain to a position where he could be safe from any change of fortune. He thought that it might be possible to get a patent from the Queen naming him Captain-General for life. Before leaving for the Continent in the spring of 1709, he spoke to the Lord Chancellor Cowper on the subject. The Lord Chancellor at once declared that such a grant would be unconstitutional. At Marlborough's entreaty he searched the public records, to see whether he could find a precedent for it, but in vain. Marlborough would not give up his object. He again communicated with the Lord Chancellor on the subject from Flanders, but

with the same result, and even then, not discouraged, wrote to the Queen, and made his demand. It reached the Queen just when Harley, and Mrs. Masham, and their friends were doing their utmost to persuade her of the danger she was in from the excessive power of the Marlboroughs, and seems seriously to have alarmed her. Swift tells us that she consulted privately with several friends whether there would be any danger in refusing the Duke's request, and the Duke of Argyle said she "need not be in pain, for he would undertake, whenever she commanded, to seize the Duke at the head of his troops, and bring him away either dead or alive." Finally she positively refused his request, and the Duke so far forgot his wonted courtesy and moderation as to write an angry letter to her, reproaching her for want of regard for his services, and for her bad treatment of his wife and encouragement of Mrs. Masham. The whole proceeding was most unwise, particularly in the Queen's existing temper, for it gave colour to the accusations of his enemies, who continually told the Queen that it was dangerous to allow such great power to be in the hands of a subject, and even insinuated that the Duke might aspire to be a second Cromwell, and place himself upon the throne.

Whilst secret plans were being made for their destruction the Whigs had attained to the summit of their desires, and the Government was entirely in their hands. But there was one body in the

State, and that perhaps the most important, with which the Whigs were by no means in high favour. This was the Church, which for some years had been of comparatively little importance in politics, so that men had forgotten a little the enormous hold it had upon the people. During the reign of Charles II., the doctrine of the divine right of kings had been enthusiastically maintained. The clergy had proclaimed Charles I. as a martyr, and had not hesitated to compare his sufferings to those of Christ himself. Only James II.'s Declarations of Indulgence, and the favours heaped by him upon Catholics, had made them reluctant participators in the Revolution. A large body known as Nonjurors had refused to take the oaths of allegiance to William III. They had hailed with delight the accession of Anne, for in her they recognised a legitimate sovereign, and Anne's care for the Church had satisfied their warmest wishes. Anne gave many substantial proofs of her strong attachment to the Church of England. In 1704 she surrendered her claim to the first-fruits of ecclesiastical benefices, and devoted them to the creation of a fund called Queen Anne's Bounty, out of which small livings were to be augmented, and by this just and generous act earned the gratitude of the clergy. Anne's special favour was given to the High Church party; she thought the Low Church, to whom the Whigs were more inclined, too latitudinarian in their views. The High Church party were full of veneration for

the rights of the sovereign, and began to take up again with zeal soon after the accession of Anne the doctrine of the divine right of kings, to which the Whigs as promoters of the Revolution were strongly opposed. The Tory doctrine of passive obedience was loudly proclaimed, and the clergy began to raise the cry that the Church was in danger, and to attack more or less openly the Ministers, whom they accused of desires to conciliate the Nonconformists. A small thing sufficed to show the strength of the clergy, and the hold they had upon the people.

One Dr. Sacheverell, Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, and rector of St. Saviour, Southwark, preached a sermon before the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London in St. Paul's, on November 5, 1709. He was a man in no way remarkable for his ability; but he was a violent and aggressive High Churchman. He preached "on the perils from false brethren," and maintained at length the duty of passive obedience, spoke of the Church as in great danger, and insinuated that the Ministers were amongst the false brethren. The sermon was afterwards printed, and had a large circulation; forty thousand copies are said to have been sold in a few days. The Whigs were very indignant; they were in a large majority in both Houses of Parliament, and they determined not to let Sacheverell go unpunished. The Ministers met early in December, to consider what should be done. Somers, with his usual wise

moderation, recommended that if anything were done, it should only be an ordinary prosecution, and he was supported by Marlborough. Sunderland, always extreme, wished Sacheverell to be impeached by the House of Commons, and tried by the House of Lords. Godolphin, partly from terror at the applause which Sacheverell's sermon had met with, and partly from a personal feeling of indignation at the nickname of Volpone, which Sacheverell had applied to him, supported Sunderland's view. Unfortunately they prevailed. The public impeachment and trial of Sacheverell was enough to rouse all the slumbering animosity of the Church against the Whigs, and the Church had the ear of the people. Sacheverell was looked upon as a martyr for the Church; prayers were offered up for him in most of the churches, and even in the royal chapel; sermons were preached all over the country in his favour. The common people showed the greatest zeal for him. They insulted those who would not join in the cry of "High Church and Sacheverell!" In their ardour they attacked the meeting-houses of the Dissenters, burnt the pews in five of them, and threatened the houses of those members of the Government who were supposed to hold specially latitudinarian views.

The whole House of Commons wished to be present at the trial; orders were therefore given to fit up Westminster Hall for it, and the task was assigned to Sir Christopher Wren, the famous

architect. All this delay only gave the more time for the popular feeling to manifest itself. The whole town was in a ferment. At last, on the 27th of February, the trial opened. Wren had arranged Westminster Hall like an amphitheatre. One hundred and thirty-nine peers in their robes were seated on the floor of the Hall; on their right the Commons rose on tiers of benches one above another; on their left were seated such strangers as had been fortunate enough to gain admission. As Sacheverell drove to the trial from his lodgings in the Temple his coach was surrounded by an excited mob eager to kiss his hand, and every head was uncovered as he passed, whilst the windows were crowded with ladies waving their handkerchiefs.

Sacheverell appeared surrounded by a number of friends, amongst whom two of the Queen's chaplains might be seen. The ablest counsel had been engaged on either side, and the right of resistance on the one side, and the duty of passive obedience on the other, were argued at length. The Queen herself came to listen; perhaps there was little doubt which way her sympathies went, and the crowd pressed round her sedan-chair, crying, "God bless your Majesty; we hope your Majesty is for High Church and Dr. Sacheverell." It is amazing to think how small a cause and how small a man had produced this ferment; persecution had turned Sacheverell into an important personage, and a saint. The Whigs, possessing

a large majority in both Houses, were able easily to obtain a conviction, but in the state of the public temper it was not thought wise to impose more than a nominal penalty. Sacheverell was merely suspended from preaching during three years, and his sermons were ordered to be burnt. The people regarded the sentence as a triumph. London and many other towns were illuminated, and bonfires blazed in honour of Sacheverell. A few months afterwards a living was given him in Shropshire, and his journey thither was like a triumphal progress. The inhabitants turned out in crowds from the different towns through which he had to pass, to meet and escort him, amidst the pealing of the church bells, through streets decorated with flowers.

One thing was clear from this, that the Church could influence the mind of the people more than the splendid success of their armies. It only needed something to bring out the sentiments of the people, and it became clear that what they wanted was a government under which they could feel that the Church was secure, rather than a government under which the war could be carried on with vigour. The great mass of the country people were decidedly and zealously Tory. In London a new class had sprung up, the stock-jobbers, the moneyed men, about whom we hear so much in the political writings of the times, who, now that the Government had had to raise such large loans for the prosecution of the war, grew

rich by speculating in the funds. The stock-jobbers and the military men were those who, as a rule, made a figure in the town; it needed something like the trial of Sacheverell to make the people speak out and show what they felt.

During the course of all this excitement about Sacheverell, the Queen's secret advisers did not fail to point out to her what might be learnt from the decided manifestation of the Tory sympathies of the people. Harley, in one of those interviews when Mrs. Masham, at the Queen's request, brought him up by the back-stairs, told her that she should gradually lessen the exorbitant power of the Marlboroughs and Godolphin by taking the disposal of employments into her own hands. The Queen began at once to act upon this advice. She appointed Earl Rivers, a Whig whom Harley had gained over, to the Lord-Lieutenancy of the Tower, without waiting to see whether Marlborough had any one to recommend. Next she sent Marlborough orders to give a regiment that was vacant to Colonel Hill, Mrs. Masham's brother. This Marlborough could not endure. By letter, and in a personal interview, he remonstrated with the Queen, stating that it was impossible to prefer so young an officer as Colonel Hill without creating serious discontent in the army. When the Queen would not yield he retired into the country. A Cabinet Council was held without him; and his declining favour might be seen by the fact that no one remarked on his absence, and everything

went on as if nothing was wrong. The Whigs did not care enough about him to stick by him if he was out of favour. In the country he wrote a letter to the Queen, stating that unless Mrs. Masham were dismissed he would resign his appointments. The letter was first sent to the leading members of the Government for their consideration. Godolphin, timid as usual, was terrified at the thought of so bold a course. Sunderland warmly approved of it, and even proposed to bring a motion into Parliament demanding the dismissal of Mrs. Masham. Somers thought that a more moderate course had better be tried first. Both he and Godolphin had several interviews with the Queen on the subject. They at last persuaded Marlborough to write a letter in which, though he complained warmly of the influence of Mrs. Masham, he did not demand her dismissal. Marlborough yielded, though both he and the Duchess would have preferred the more decided course. The Duchess writes on the subject: "If he comes to town and hears the Queen repeat Abigail's advice to satisfy him he will make a strange figure." Before Marlborough's letter reached the Queen she had determined, under the pressure of her Ministers, to give way; for she was terrified lest any motion should be brought into Parliament against Mrs. Masham. She sent word to Marlborough that she would not insist upon the promotion of Colonel Hill; and when he came to see her she treated him with great kindness.

Soon after this, as the Dutch were eager for the Duke's return to the Netherlands, an address was brought into Parliament asking the Queen to send him abroad. Harley, who felt how much better he could carry on his plans if the Duke were absent, allowed this address to pass without opposition. Godolphin had prepared the Queen's answer to the address, in which he made her speak of the Duke's services in warm terms. But the Queen insisted on having some changes made; so that, as the Duke's friends said, the answer was made very dry. He left England in the midst of the excitement about the trial of Sacheverell, which caused him much anxiety. He wrote to the Duchess that "in time it must have a good effect upon England;" but ended the same letter by saying, "We have a good many disagreeable accounts come from England to this country, both as to the intentions of the Court as well as the inclinations of the people for Sacheverell, which does great hurt."

CHAPTER XV.

The Fall of the Whigs.

EVER since the breaking off of the peace conferences at the Hague, in the spring of 1709, secret negotiations had been carried on between the French and the peace party in Holland. In the beginning of 1710, Lewis XIV. once more made overtures for peace; and though the Allies still distrusted his sincerity, and made active preparations for war, it was decided to hold a conference at Gertrudenberg, to take his proposals into consideration. Lewis XIV. declared himself ready to make any sacrifices for peace, if only he could preserve some fragment of the Spanish monarchy as a kingdom for his grandson, and could escape from the obnoxious condition of aiding with his own arms to turn him out of Spain. But the conduct of the French in the course of these negotiations made the Allies more than ever doubtful of their sincerity; they knew that, in spite of his professions to the contrary, Lewis XIV. still continued to encourage his grandson and promise him help. Austria, moreover,

was fully determined to continue the war until the entire Spanish monarchy was handed over to Charles. The distress of the French was such that the English Government expressed themselves confident that peace would be concluded. But the deliberations came to nothing; and the French ascribed their failure mainly to Austria, whose ambition, once fairly roused, passed all bounds. The Duke of Marlborough acted throughout as the mouthpiece of his Government. He spoke of himself as "white paper," on which they could write their wishes. His letters betray his keen consciousness of his gradual loss of favour. He could no longer order everything freely as he would, but met with opposition on every side, so that he tried to confine himself as much as possible to his immediate duties as Captain-General.

As soon as it became clear that the negotiations would lead to nothing, Eugene and Marlborough at once began the active business of the campaign. A great effort was to be made in the Netherlands, with a view of preparing everything for an invasion of France; and at the same time the Duke of Savoy was to enter France from Piedmont, with the hope of stirring up the disaffected Protestants in Dauphiné to aid the Allies.

Marlborough began the campaign in bad spirits. "I am so discouraged by everything I see," he wrote to his wife, "that I have never during this war gone into the field with so heavy a heart as I do at this time. I own to you that the present

humours in England give me a good deal of trouble; for I cannot see how it is possible they should mend till everything is yet worse." His object was to take such fortresses as yet remained to the French on their northern frontier. He began with the siege of Douai, the possession of which would be of the greatest importance to him, for there was water communication from it the whole way to Amsterdam; and if they held it the Allies would be able to get their supplies brought by water from Amsterdam, and stored at Douai for future enterprises.

Marlborough found the sufferings of the wretched peasantry on the French border greater even than in the year before. He writes: "It is impossible, without seeing it, to be sensible of the misery of this country; at least one-half of the people of the villages since the beginning of last winter are dead, and the rest look as if they came out of their graves. It is so mortifying that no Christian can see it but must with all his heart wish for a speedy peace." And again he writes: "The churches and the villages are full of the poor country people, the greatest part of them being sick, and most of the towns being infected with a spotted fever." It is no wonder that the Allied generals, when they saw this misery, thought that no terms were too exorbitant to ask Lewis XIV. in return for the blessing of peace.

In spite of Villars' boasts the French were unable to prevent the capture of Douai. During the

siege Marlborough was much disturbed by the news which reached him from England. Some of the leading Whigs, afraid of the intrigues of Harley and Mrs. Masham, had earnestly pressed the Duchess of Marlborough to return to town after the Duke's departure, to aid them with her influence. Sunderland wrote to the Duke: "Without her I know we shall all sink." The great difficulty was to get the Treasurer "to act like a man," and it was well known that the Marlboroughs were the only people who could possibly stir up the timid Godolphin to show any decision. But it would doubtless have been better to keep the Duchess out of town if possible. She was not likely to do anything to smooth matters with the Queen. She intended to resign her offices at the conclusion of a peace, when the Duke would be free to enjoy a little leisure with her, and she wished to feel sure that the Queen would keep her promise of transferring in that case her offices to her daughters. Anne tried to evade her request, and when the Duchess pressed her for an answer she said, "I desire that I may never be troubled any more on the subject." Disgusted at the continual slights she received, the Duchess retired again to the country, and, in spite of the entreaties of her Whig friends, refused for some time to come to Court. Her enemies took the opportunity of blaming her for neglecting her duties, and spread stories of the disrespectful language which she used about the Queen. She found it impossible to

stay quiet long, and give people occasion to say that her favour was entirely lost, and early in April she appeared at Court again, and demanded an interview with the Queen. Anne tried hard to escape a private meeting. She put it off on various pretexts, and begged the Duchess to put what she had to say in writing. But the Duchess was remorseless. She wrote, saying that all she had to say related to her own vindication, and that she would ask for no answer from the Queen. This letter she followed to Kensington without waiting for an answer, and sent the page of the back-stairs to ask whether she might be admitted. Whilst he was gone she sat down in the window, waiting, as she says, "like a Scotch lady with a petition expecting an answer, whilst the Queen doubtless consulted with Mrs. Masham." At last she was admitted, and the interview must have been sufficiently comic. The Duchess was all tears and passion, the Queen was sullen and obstinate. Whilst the Duchess justified her conduct in passionate words, the Queen looked contemptuous and impatient, and remarked at any pause in the flow of words, "You can put it in writing." When tired of this remark, she next repeated at intervals, "You desired no answer, and you shall have none." At last, when the storm could not be stopped, she said, "I will quit the room;" but the Duchess followed, bursting into floods of tears, and continued her vindication, to which the Queen rejoined as before, "You desired no answer, and you

shall have none." At last, beside herself with passion, the Duchess exclaimed, "I am confident you will suffer in this world or the next for so much inhumanity." The Queen retorted with indignation, "That is my business," and withdrew. The poor Duchess had to sit down and dry her tears by herself, and after a while scratched at the Queen's door, to say that if it pleased the Queen she would not go to her lodge at Windsor as long as the Queen was at the Castle. But the Queen answered through the door that she might come if she pleased, it would give her no uneasiness. This was the last personal interview between them.

At this time the Whigs were kept in constant alarm by rumours of an approaching dissolution of Parliament, and of changes in the Government. The Queen was determined to show that she was no longer kept in bondage by Marlborough and Godolphin, and would act for herself. Without consulting the Treasurer, she dismissed the Whig Lord Chamberlain, appointing the Earl of Shrewsbury in his stead. Shrewsbury had been a long while on the Continent, and had come back to England with an Italian wife. He had been cautiously watching the party conflicts to see which side it would be wisest to join, and whilst professing friendship for Marlborough, had allowed himself to be gained over by Harley. Godolphin ventured to remonstrate with the Queen; but when he saw that she meant to have her own way, both he and the other Whigs determined to

put up with this affront, and persuaded Marlborough to do the same. Next the Queen bade the Duke give promotion to Colonel Masham and Colonel Hill, Mrs. Masham's husband and brother. Marlborough, with some reluctance, consented to promote Colonel Masham; but the Queen insisted with all the more obstinacy upon the promotion of Hill also, because she had had before to give way on this point, and Marlborough was obliged to yield, for he saw that the Whigs would not support him in a refusal. The Whigs were determined to cling to power as long as possible; they hoped to temporize, above all to put off the dissolution. They even submitted tamely when at last the long-dreaded blow was struck, and Sunderland was dismissed from office, and succeeded as Secretary of State by the Earl of Dartmouth, a zealous Tory. The Queen had always disliked Sunderland, and his conduct in an office which brought him into frequent personal contact with herself had increased her distaste for his violent, arrogant temper. Marlborough could not but feel the disgrace of his son-in-law as a blow aimed at himself. He hoped at least to defer it, and wrote, in a letter to be shown to the Queen: "What I desire is, that she would be pleased to defer the removal of Lord Sunderland till the end of this campaign, and then she may have the winter before her to take measures with the Allies for the command of this army. . . . This is what I beg in reward of all

my faithful services; if it must be otherwise, and that nothing but my immediate retiring will content those that have at this time the power, I must submit, with the satisfaction that everybody must be sensible of my readiness to have served, if it might have been allowed with honour." But Harley's intrigues were too much for the Duke. He himself talked over such Whigs as he could, and made the Queen talk over Somers. Divided by jealousies and suspicions, the Whigs had no common policy, and shared only the desire to keep in office if possible. Godolphin was terrified at the thought that the Duke might carry out his intention of resignation, and at a meeting of the Ministers he suggested that a memorial should be drawn up and sent to him, begging him to retain his command for the good of his country. This was done, and signed by all the Ministers except Shrewsbury and Somerset, whom Harley had gained over.

It was not difficult to persuade Marlborough; he had already made up his mind not to let this personal matter make him do anything which might be harmful to the common cause. He attempted to regard the disgrace of Sunderland as having no bearing upon himself. It is clear that the position held by him during the first years of Anne's reign, when he controlled every appointment, and was consulted on every detail, was anomalous, and could not possibly last; but this did not make it easier to bear the gradual

loss of power, and the curtailment of his authority to what belonged to him as Captain-General. His letters are full of despondency and disgust with the state of affairs. A new quarrel between the Queen and the Duchess did not tend to make matters better. The Duchess could not let the disgrace of Sunderland pass. She sent one of her angry letters to the Queen, blaming her in her usual disrespectful manner for the favour shown to Mrs. Masham, and, hoping to make mischief between the Duke of Somerset and the Queen, she sent an old letter in which Somerset had spoken of the Queen with very little ceremony. Anne judged from this that the Duchess would not scruple, if it served her purpose, to publish abroad the tender letters which in former days Mrs. Morley had written to Mrs. Freeman. She therefore demanded that the Duchess should send back to her all her "strange scrawls." This the Duchess refused to do in a violent letter, to which the Queen sent no answer, and after this there was no more direct correspondence between them.

The deep dislike with which the Duchess had managed to inspire the Queen greatly helped Harley's schemes. He was a most adroit intriguer, and knew well how to turn the weakness of his enemies to his own advantage. He had no wish to strike a violent blow which might rouse his opponents to united and spirited action; he could bide his time, and weaken the opposition he met with by sowing discord amongst the Whigs. The

Whig leaders had never quite lost their distrust of Marlborough and Godolphin. Harley did his utmost to revive this distrust, and to convince them that their interests did not lie with those of the Treasurer and the General. Some, like Somerset and Shrewsbury, he managed to gain over, and he succeeded in entirely destroying the Queen's confidence and affection for the Treasurer who had served her so long and so faithfully. Rumours went about the city that Godolphin was to be dismissed, and spread terror amongst the moneyed men, who considered that the security of the public credit depended upon Godolphin's careful management. For the first time we hear a fall in the funds spoken of as a sign of the political condition. The Bank of England, in alarm, sent a deputation to the Queen, which represented to her the anxiety that the dismissal of Sunderland had caused, and begged her to make no further changes. She answered by saying that she had no desire to do so at present, and this was taken for an assurance that Godolphin would not be dismissed. Harley did not wish him to be dismissed until he could feel sure that his disgrace would not lead Marlborough to resign. Little by little the proud Duke, who had been accustomed for so many years to manage everything at his pleasure, had been brought to bear patiently one humiliation after another, and in the same way the country was to be gradually accustomed to see the government pass into new hands.

It was early in July that Sunderland was dismissed. During the following month Godolphin, who met with nothing but coldness from Anne, grew daily more uneasy. On the 6th of August he begged an audience of the Queen, and remonstrated with her for allowing herself to be governed by secret advisers whilst her real Ministers lost all power. At last he asked her whether it was her wish that he should continue to serve her, and she replied without hesitation, "Yes." Great therefore was his surprise when next morning he received a note from the Queen, telling him that it was impossible for her to continue him any longer in her service, and adding, "I desire that, instead of bringing the staff to me, you will break it, which I believe will be easier for us both." She promised at the same time to give him a pension, but in spite of her promise the pension was never paid. Godolphin had managed the public finances in the most honourable manner, and with the strictest economy. He came out of office a poor man, and, too proud to ask for the pension which was not paid him, he was left in straitened circumstances until the death of his brother increased his fortune. He was a useful and careful public servant, but he was not fit to be the leader of a party. His timidity made him shrink from decided action at the moments when decided action was necessary for his cause. He had no political principles strong enough to make him willing to suffer in their behalf. He seems to have been entirely

ruled by Marlborough and the Duchess; but, on the other hand, his timid fears never failed to produce their effect upon Marlborough's mind, and continually kept him from acting decidedly in political matters.

The disgrace of Godolphin produced a panic in the city; the bank shares fell at once from 140 to 110. Harley's first desire was to restore public confidence. The Treasury was put into a Commission, of which he himself was one, and the other members were all men so moderate that Godolphin wrote to Marlborough that the Commission would utterly disgust the Tories. Still, in spite of all kinds of reassuring statements, the panic in the city continued, and when the Commissioners demanded a new loan shortly after their appointment it was refused. Godolphin, on the other hand, had never found any difficulty in raising money on easy terms. From these signs the Whigs hoped that the new Commissioners would not be able to keep their places long. They determined therefore to keep their offices, and wait in the hopes that a favourable turn of affairs might bring back power into their hands again. Harley, who became Chancellor of the Exchequer, and virtual Prime Minister, was very willing to coalesce with the Whigs. He had no liking for the extreme Tories, and wished to govern by means of the moderate men. Marlborough was entreated by Godolphin and the Whigs to remain at his post; and the Queen, who wrote herself to tell him of Godolphin's

dismissal, that he might hear it first from her, promised that he and his army should want for nothing.

The news caused Marlborough the deepest anxiety. He could see the effect produced upon the Continent by the changes in the English Government, and indeed foreigners rated their importance even higher than the English; for they regarded Marlborough as the main stay of the Grand Alliance, and were terrified at the signs which showed the diminution of his power in England. The Dutch States and the Emperor had even remonstrated with the Queen when Sunderland was dismissed; but Marlborough discouraged foreign interference in the internal affairs of England, for he saw that it did harm rather than good. His only anxiety now seems to have been to prepare for the future by drawing as close as possible to the Elector of Hanover. Neither did he neglect from time to time to send messages to the Pretender expressing entire devotion to his cause. He did this in the hope of securing his safety in case, as many men thought at that time, the Stuarts should be restored to the English throne; but he was really entirely in favour of the succession of the House of Hanover, and meant to use all his influence in the cause of the Elector. At present he was determined for many reasons to retain his command. He saw plainly that if he retired the affairs of the Grand Alliance would fall into confusion. His Whig

friends entreated him to keep his post; for they still clung to the hope that the Tory Government would be unable to maintain itself, and that they would return triumphantly to power. Besides these considerations, Marlborough's own desires must have led him to wish to keep at the head of an army which he had so long led to victory. If only, as the Queen promised, he could be sure of supplies, he hoped still to bring the war to a triumphant end.

In England change followed change. Harley had at first meant to keep some of the Whigs in office, but he soon found that no arts could gain them over to his cause. The Whigs, who found themselves treated by the Queen with coldness and want of confidence, saw that it was useless to cling to office any longer. On the 21st of September Parliament was dissolved, and by degrees a new Government was formed. The change was complete, and every post of importance was given to a Tory. Harley's friend, St. John, a man far more able than himself, became Secretary of State. The new elections gave opportunities for the same manifestations of popular feeling as had accompanied the trial of Sacheverell. The cry everywhere was for the Church. Electors on their way to the hustings were hustled and knocked down unless they promised to vote for the Church candidate. The result was that in the new Parliament the Tories had an overwhelming majority.

Harley, not content with having triumphed so far, lost no opportunity of still further strengthening his position. The Tories were quicker than the Whigs to recognize the use that could be made of the press. St. John, himself an accomplished and learned writer, was on terms of intimacy with most of the literary men in the town. Godolphin had found his amusement in cock-fighting, betting, and horse-racing at Newmarket. Marlborough's defective education had given him no literary tendencies, and his time and thoughts were so absorbed by the great part he had to play, that he had no time for the cultivation of personal tastes. He seems to have cared about no amusements; and the only relief he allowed himself was planning the adornment of Blenheim, and buying pictures and ordering hangings and carpets to be made for his magnificent house. Both he and Godolphin neglected to pay any attention to the literary men who at that time remained in London. Amongst the leading Whigs, Somers and Halifax were the only two who possessed real cultivation and literary tastes.

Both Harley and St. John saw how easily the public ear might be reached through the press. This was the great age of political pamphlets. The people possessed no reports of the debates in Parliament, and the Ministers could not hope to influence them by their speeches in Parliament. The easiest way was to get some clever

writer into their confidence, and make him employ his pen in their service. Never has literature played so remarkable a part in English politics. Each important event called forth a shower of pamphlets on either side, whilst various writers tried to influence public opinion by little papers on political and social subjects, which appeared daily or weekly, and were the subject of comment and discussion in the coffee-houses, then the centre of political life. Literary men no longer lived, as they had done in the reign of Elizabeth, a wild and careless life in back streets; but they mixed as equals with great politicians, and were rewarded for their devotion to their patron's cause by promotion to important political offices.

When Harley came into power the Tories started a political paper called the *Examiner*, to attack the faults of the last Government, and revile the Duke of Marlborough. At first it was conducted by St. John himself, Prior, and one or two other less important writers; but St. John was quick to find out and gain over to his cause the greatest genius of that age. Dr. Swift had just come over from his living in Ireland on a mission to the Queen, to demand the remission of the first-fruits, payable by the Irish clergy to the Crown. Swift, who had grown up in Sir William Temple's house, and had long been his private secretary, was a Whig, though not a very ardent one. He had, moreover, a bitter hatred for Wharton, who as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland had treated him with neglect;

neither had he been satisfied with the way in which Godolphin received him on a former occasion. Therefore, when he reached London, just at the time of the fall of the Whigs, and found, as he says in the journal which he kept for the friend of his youth, Stella, a girl who had grown up with him at Sir William Temple's, and followed him to Ireland, that "the Whigs were ravished to see me, and would lay hold on me as a twig while they are drowning," he did not feel inclined to hold out his helping hand to them. He saw without sorrow the Whigs lose office, though he confesses to feeling a little shocked at the suddenness of the change, but adds that he does not care "if they are all hanged." The Whigs made the greatest efforts to gain Swift, especially Lord Halifax, who invited him to Hampton Court, and treated him with the greatest respect and kindness. Swift found himself in a position which much gratified his pride; for he was courted on all sides, as Harley too received him with the warm kindness of an old friend. But he distrusted the friendship of the Whigs, who had forgotten him when they were in power, and only remembered him in their distress. Harley and St. John understood both the use he might be to them and how to gain him. Swift was intensely proud, and they treated him as if he were their equal. He was able to feel that great men sought him out, and that he did not seek them. Never has any man not in office had so great an influence on public affairs.

Harley was in the habit of having little dinners every week of the chief members of the Government and a few of their supporters, and Swift was generally present on these occasions. His voice was listened to in everything. He advised and found fault with the Ministers with perfect freedom, and shared their most secret councils. Through him they were able to influence the public. He was the greatest master of political pamphleteering there has ever been. With consummate skill and the most withering irony he showed forth in forcible style the weaknesses of his opponents, and guided public opinion almost at his pleasure. The *Examiner* was at once handed over to his care, and he wrote thirty-two numbers of it in succession. In these his great object was to show that the Whig Government, under which the country had seemed to rise to such a marvellous pitch of power and prosperity, had really brought nothing but misery upon the people, that the resources of the country had been recklessly wasted by an extravagant Ministry, and that its money had flowed into the pockets of an unprincipled set of stock-jobbers; that the great general whom they had worshipped almost as a god was nothing but a very faulty mortal after all, who had prolonged the war to enrich himself.

These and other similar views were set forth week after week in the *Examiner*, with all the subtle wit, all the profound irony, all the stirring eloquence of the greatest humourist whom Eng-

land has ever seen, and did more than anything that Harley and his colleagues could do to destroy the credit of the last Government. The Whigs had no writer of equal genius to oppose to Swift. Addison, in his own way as gifted a writer as Swift, and a firm Whig, tried what he could do; but the genial and graceful critic of literature and society was powerless in the field of politics, and soon deserted it. His *Spectators* were read daily by every lady of fashion of the time, but his political writings produced no effect. In Steele the Whigs had another firm friend; but honest Dick Steele, with his warm, open heart, and kindly way of laughing at the foibles of others, as often drunk as sober, was no match for the stern Swift, who had no feeling for the weaknesses of others, and would crush an adversary as remorselessly as he would forget a friend. A host of Whig pamphleteers tried to answer Swift, but only brought down upon their unhappy heads more bitter sarcasm than before. Swift also superintended the work of a number of other Tory writers. He was courted by all who wished to make friends with the new Government, and often complains bitterly of the way in which he was pestered with requests of all kinds. In the journal which he kept for Stella, and sent her every month, he tells all his experiences, and writes to a friend who he knows will value the smallest detail. The journal gains much interest by the light which all the little personal details throw upon the character

of the writer and the manners of the times, as well as upon the great affairs of the nation. The changes in the Government are not given any more importance than his own little bodily ailments; the doings of the Ministry are not told more carefully than the places where Swift dined each day.

CHAPTER XVI

Peace Negotiations.

THE campaign of 1710 was full of disappointment to Marlborough. He had hoped to carry the war into the heart of France. But after Douai fell, Villars so placed his army that it was impossible either to attack him or to besiege Arras, as Marlborough had intended. He was obliged to content himself with the capture of Bethune, St. Venant, and Aire. Heavy rains, and a great deal of illness among his troops, prevented further operations. Besides this his energy was somewhat paralysed by the changes which had taken place in England. He felt that if he failed in anything now he would meet with the severest censure, and on this account an expedition which he had planned at the beginning of the campaign against Calais and Boulogne was given up as being too hazardous. In the uncertainty of his position Marlborough thought once more of the offer which in former days had been repeatedly made to him by the Emperor and the Archduke

Charles, and he wrote to Charles asking whether he would now make him Governor of the Spanish Netherlands. Charles managed to evade his request by saying that he would be willing to do so if it were agreeable to the Dutch. This was the same as a refusal, for the Dutch had always objected strongly to the proposal.

When the Duke went to the Hague at the close of the campaign he was entreated by all the representatives of the Allies to continue in his command. If he was out of favour at home, at least the foreign powers recognized his importance as the one man who could keep the Alliance together. But the English Parliament, which met at the end of November, had for the first time omitted to pass a vote of thanks to him, though a public thanksgiving had been held for the successes in Flanders. When a vote of thanks was moved by Scarborough in the House of Lords, where the Whigs had a majority, the Government managed to have the question dropped, and St. John wrote: "One would imagine that Lord Scarborough was hired by somebody who wished the Duke of Marlborough ill, to take so unconcerted and so ridiculous a measure."

The people however had not yet lost their admiration for the great Duke. When he reached London in December, on his return from the Hague, they crowded round his carriage with enthusiastic shouts. Anxious to avoid an uproar, which he knew would tell against him with the

Government, instead of going straight to St. James's, as he had intended, he turned aside to Montague House, and waited there till the crowd had dispersed, and he could go unobserved to the Queen. She received him with embarrassment, and talked of the weather. From the first he was made to feel how entirely his position had changed. The man who but a short while before had been consulted on the smallest trifle, and courted by everybody, was now treated with coolness and reserve by the Queen and the Ministers alike. Another blow was preparing for him. Harley and St. John were only waiting to be convinced that the Duke would keep his command, whatever happened, before they recommended the Queen to dismiss the Duchess from all her offices. Anne was eager to do so. She had been still more angered against her former friend because the Duchess had threatened to publish her letters; and she had also used Sir David Hamilton, one of the Queen's physicians who owed his place to her favour, as a means of sending continual messages to the Queen, justifying herself against the accusations made against her, and demanding a return to her former favour.

The Duchess was much enraged by a number of the *Examiner* which appeared on November 23, 1710, in which Swift, ridiculing those who spoke of the ingratitude shown to the Duke of Marlborough, drew up for comparison the two following bills:

A Bill of Roman Gratitude.

Imprim.—	£	s.	d.
For frankincense, and earthen pots to burn it in	4	10	0
A bull for sacrifice	8	0	0
An embroidered garment	50	0	0
A crown of laurel	0	0	2
A statue	100	0	0
A trophy	80	0	0
A thousand copper medals, value halfpence a-piece	2	1	8
A triumphal arch	500	0	0
A triumphal car, valued as a modern coach	100	0	0
Casual charges at the triumph	150	0	0
	£994	11	10

A Bill of British Ingratitude.

Imprim.—	
Woodstock	40,000
Blenheim	200,000
Post Office grant	100,000
Mindelheim	30,000
Pictures, jewels, &c.	60,000
Pall Mall grant, &c.	10,000
Employments	100,000
	£540,000

Neither did Swift spare the Duchess, but insinuated that as Mistress of the Robes she had purloined in eight years twenty-two thousand pounds. The Duchess in her indignation drew up a vindication of herself, which she sent to the Queen, who after reading it fully justified the

Duchess from the charges brought against her by remarking, "Everyone knows that cheating is not the Duchess of Marlborough's fault."

The thought of the probable disgrace of his wife caused the Duke much agitation. He was ill and harassed, and made the Duchess so anxious that she wrote a very humble letter to the Queen, promising never to do anything that could be disagreeable to her. The Duke went to present it himself to the Queen, hoping by its means and by his own entreaties to soften Anne's resolution. He had some difficulty in persuading the Queen even to read the letter, and when at last she did so, she only said, "I cannot change my resolution." Then the Duke exerted all his eloquence to move the Queen. For a long while he pleaded; but Anne, when she had once made up her mind to anything, had all the obstinacy of her family. She only answered by insisting that the golden key, the badge of the Duchess's office, should be brought to her in three days. Then the Duke so far forgot his dignity as to throw himself on his knees, and beg for a respite even of ten days. But Anne answered more shortly than before, this time saying that she must have the key in two days. The Duke saw it was of no use. He rose from his knees, and began to speak of another indignity which he had suffered, by the punishment of three officers for no other crime than drinking his health with some expressions of opprobrium for the existing Ministers. But the Queen in-

terrupted him, saying, "I will talk of no other business till I have the key."

With melancholy feelings he told the Duchess the Queen's decision. The Duchess passionately tore the key from her girdle, and flung it into the middle of the room, bidding him pick it up and carry it to whom he pleased. The Duke took it to the Queen that very evening. The Duchess's offices were soon disposed of to the Queen's new favourites. Mrs. Masham became Keeper of the Privy Purse; but she did not reign without a rival, for the more important office of Groom of the Stole was given to the Duchess of Somerset, who was gaining great favour with the Queen.

The Duchess of Marlborough determined to revenge herself as far as possible. In former days, when Anne's fondness for her knew no bounds, she had begged her to take, in addition to her other salaries, a pension of two thousand a year from the Privy Purse. This for some reason or other the Duchess never drew; but she now determined to claim it, and to demand also the arrears for the past nine years. This she did when she sent in her accounts to the Queen, and Anne ordered the sum to be paid. Some months after the Duchess was told to give up her apartments in St. James's Palace, as the Queen had need of them. In petty spite she ordered, when her furniture was to be removed, the brass locks which she had put on the doors to be torn off, and the marble chimney-pieces to be pulled

down. The Duke, who was then in Holland, was by no means pleased when he heard of these orders, and wrote to her, begging her not to remove the chimney-pieces. He was in time to save them; but the brass locks were torn off; and the Queen, who heard of the orders the Duchess had given, was most indignant, and said, referring to the building at Blenheim, that she would "build no house for the Duke of Marlborough when the Duchess had pulled hers to pieces."

The Duke did not resign, as he had threatened to do, when the Duchess was dismissed. It would have been better for his dignity had he shown more firmness at this time. As it was, he acted exactly as Harley wished him to act; for it would not have suited Harley's plans had he then resigned. The Ministers were delighted to find that the Duke would bear any humiliations they chose to heap upon him. Even Swift thought they pressed him a little too hard; he was wise enough to see that they let personal quarrels mingle too much with their proceedings.

Ever since Harley came into office his great object had been to bring the war to an end. The Tories had accused their opponents of needlessly prolonging the war for their own interests, and had always declared themselves in favour of peace; it would not therefore do for them to continue the war when they were in power. At the same time nothing could be done suddenly. The people were proud of the military glory won

by English arms. If any of the acts of the new Government tended to diminish it, they might easily take back their allegiance to the Whigs, under whose rule such great things had been done. Harley's first care therefore was to show what great faults the Whigs had committed, even in the management of the war and of financial matters.

In the campaign of 1710 affairs in Spain had at first gone greatly in favour of the Allies, and Charles had once more occupied Madrid. But he found it a desert; for the inhabitants had either shut themselves in their houses, or followed their beloved Philip. Adversity gave Philip new strength. The Spaniards gathered round him. Lewis XIV. sent him Vendome to command his forces. It was impossible for the Allies to remain in Castile, and by the end of the campaign they had lost nearly all they had gained, and had moreover learnt the hopelessness of trying to drive Philip from Castile, where he had gained so firm a hold upon the affections of the people. The English Generals in Spain were Whigs; it was determined therefore to hold a parliamentary enquiry into the causes of the failure of the war in Spain, and to bring out in contrast to the failure of the Whigs the successes of Lord Peterborough, whose cause the Tories had made their own. Galway, maimed and scarred with the wounds which he had received in the war, was called before the Peers to be examined. He had been unsuccessful as a General, but the many

wounds which he had received showed that at least he was not deficient in personal bravery. The Whig Lords spoke in his favour, and Marlborough said, "It is somewhat strange that Generals who had acted to the best of their understanding, and had lost their limbs in the service, should be examined like offenders about insignificant things." But he produced no effect, and the end of the proceedings was a vote of censure on Galway and a vote of thanks to Peterborough.

Meanwhile Swift and the other Tory pamphleteers were continuing the work of reviling Marlborough, and destroying his popularity. He felt this deeply, and speaks of it in his letters to his wife as "this villanous way of printing, which stabs me to the heart." He disliked the whole method of fighting party battles through the press, and writes: "I do not love to see my name in print, for I am persuaded that an honest man must be fortified by his own actions, and not by the pen of a writer, though he should be a zealous friend." Another way in which his loss of favour was shown was the difficulty of obtaining the necessary payments for the continuation of the works at Blenheim. When the palace had been first projected as the gift of a grateful nation to their great general, Anne had taken such an interest in it that she had caused a model of the building to be placed in Kensington Palace; now it was difficult to get the necessary money out of the Government to

pay the workmen, and an attempt had even been made to make the Duke pay them himself; but the Duchess was too clever to suffer this, and preferred that the works should remain unfinished, rather than that they should take the cost of them upon themselves. Things altogether were so unpleasant that the Duke was eager to get away from England as quickly as possible, and he returned to his army in February.

Harley's own position, at this time, was not very satisfactory. He had pleased nobody entirely, his design of co-operating with the Whigs had failed, and he had proved unwilling to adopt the decisive measures which would have satisfied the extreme Tories. They had formed themselves into a club called the October Club, in which they discussed the measures to be pursued. They objected to Harley for his moderation and his undecided, mysterious ways, and considered him unfit to be the leader of their party. He himself was without anxiety, and distracted his friends by his easy-going ways and apparent indifference. A fortunate accident, however, restored his popularity. A French refugee, the Marquis of Guiscard, was discovered to be engaged in a treasonable correspondence with France. He was brought before the Privy Council to be examined, and then, in a desperate desire for revenge, stabbed Harley with a penknife. St. John and some others attacked him with their swords, and secured him after wounding him severely. Harley's wound was not

dangerous, but it was bad enough for his friends to make a great talk about it. Swift was in despair, and wrote to Stella, "My heart is almost broken." In reality, nothing more fortunate could have happened to Harley. He appeared to the people as a sufferer for the cause of the nation, and became at once the object of the most enthusiastic popularity. He was raised to the peerage as Earl of Oxford, and soon after made Lord Treasurer. At the same time he was relieved from the presence of a dangerous rival by the death of the Queen's uncle, the Earl of Rochester, who had great influence amongst the Tories, and he seemed for the time supreme. He busied himself with playing the sort of double game in which he most delighted. Whilst secretly engaged in negotiations with Lewis XIV., he wrote friendly letters to Marlborough, assuring him of his support, and of his anxiety in prosecuting the war.

Parliament at the beginning of the year had voted large supplies; the Government raised more than half the money by lotteries, the only way in which they could make a loan acceptable to the stock-jobbers. Soon after Marlborough's arrival at the Hague the affairs of the Allies received a great blow by the death of the Emperor Joseph. He left no heir but his brother the Archduke Charles; and now the whole energies of the House of Austria were bent to secure the election of Charles to the Empire. Marlborough had hoped to be joined at once by Prince Eugene, and to

open a brilliant campaign; but Eugene was detained at Vienna. He could not reach the camp of the Allies till nearly the end of May; and a few days after he got there he received orders from Vienna to withdraw to the Rhine with the greater part of his army. Marlborough was left alone, with diminished forces, at a time when he knew that the least false step would bring down upon him a storm of reproaches, and when he suspected that secret negotiations for peace were going on, of which he who had so long directed the war was told nothing.

Lewis XIV. once more sent Villars against him. Villars employed all his skill in causing a series of fortified lines to be made during the winter, which were to defend Arras and Bouchain, and prevent Marlborough from penetrating any further into France. He was so satisfied with their success that he wrote in his usual boastful way to Lewis XIV., saying that he had brought Marlborough to a *ne plus ultra*. Marlborough, after the withdrawal of Eugene and his troops, felt himself too weak to risk a battle, but determined to penetrate Villars' lines and invest Bouchain. He managed to deceive Villars as to his real object. The French were amused and distracted by being allowed to gain some trifling advantages. Villars was strongly entrenched along the Scarpe; from the marching of the allied troops he gathered that Marlborough's object was to attack, and called in his distant garrisons to aid in the battle, thus

leaving several points on his fortified lines but feebly defended. Marlborough drew up facing him on the 2nd August, and every one expected a battle. On the morning of the 4th the Duke was even to be seen riding along the lines pointing out to the different generals the directions in which the attack was to be made. The French were confident of victory; the Allies, gloomy and dispirited, thought it nothing but madness to dream of attacking an enemy so strongly entrenched. But Marlborough had already despatched troops to prepare for crossing the enemy's lines at a point which had been left undefended. A little before nine orders were given to furl the tents; the attention of the enemy was distracted by the movements of some bodies of light cavalry, and the march of the army began. The Duke himself led the way at the head of fifty squadrons, and through a cloudless night lit by a full moon the army marched rapidly on.

At daybreak they were met with the news that Cadogan, with the advance troops, was in possession of the enemy's lines. The march was accelerated; the stragglers and the weary were left behind to be brought up by a body of horse, and the army pressed on. They crossed the enemy's lines in the morning at the spot which Cadogan had captured on the Sanzet; and after a forced march of thirty-six miles, which took sixteen hours, over a country intersected with rivers, the weary troops encamped in the afternoon on the other side of the enemy's lines.

Villars had discovered Marlborough's intention when it was too late to prevent it. The Allies had penetrated the *ne plus ultra*, and it was now impossible to prevent the siege of Bouchain, which Marlborough at once began. This bloodless victory shows almost more strikingly than the great battles he won the military genius of the Duke. His enemies in England tried to make people look upon it as a mere trifle; but both at the time and afterwards it aroused the admiration and wonder of military critics as a feat of astonishing skill.

During the siege of Bouchain Marlborough gave a proof of his true courtesy by the generous way in which he treated the possessions of Fénélon, the famous Archbishop of Cambrai. His corn magazines were in danger of being plundered by the foraging troops of the Allies, and in consequence Marlborough sent a detachment to guard them, and to convey the corn in safety to Cambrai.

After the fall of Bouchain Marlborough wished to proceed to the siege of Quesnoy. During the whole of this campaign he wrote with openness to Harley, now Earl of Oxford, telling him of all his plans, and asking his approval. Oxford played a double game with much skill. His negotiations with Lewis XIV. were already far advanced; but he still professed an active interest in Marlborough's schemes, and a zealous co-operation in his endeavours. The Minister who had attained to power through the intrigues of a bed-

chamber woman had no liking for a straight and open path, and made his first proposals for peace through a French priest, the Abbé Gualtier, who had come to England as Tallard's confessor. Gualtier was secretly sent over to Torcy in January, 1711, and asked him whether he wished for peace. It was like asking a dying man whether he wished for life, and seemed almost too good to be true. When assured however that he might treat with Gualtier, Lewis XIV. made in April secret proposals for peace; but these were very different from the proposals which he had made before. Conscious that the English Ministers now needed peace as much as he did, he resumed once more his haughty tone. He offered only such conditions as he thought would be satisfactory to England and Holland, and made no mention of depriving Philip of the crown of Spain. The English Minister, who knew that neither the Queen nor the country would put up with a peace concluded separately from the Dutch, sent over these terms to Lord Raby, who had succeeded the Whig Lord Townshend as English Minister at the Hague. Raby was bidden to show the French terms to Heinsius, and St. John added: "The Duke of Marlborough has no communication from hence of this affair; I suppose he will have none from the Hague."

The Dutch answered by expressing their desire for peace, but said they wanted more particulars. They really wished the proposals to be made to them, and did not like this direct communication

between England and France. But Lewis XIV., who saw that his best chance of peace lay in the wishes of the English Ministers, preferred to carry on his communications with England. A new messenger was now sent to Paris, Matthew Prior, the poet, a personal friend of Oxford and St. John, and formerly Secretary of the Embassy at Paris. His mission was kept strictly secret, and no one knew where he was gone. After considering his proposals, Lewis XIV. sent him back to London with Mesnager, a French merchant who had taken part in the conferences at Gertrudenberg. Mesnager remained secretly in London for some time, conferring with Ministers, and even with the Queen, but not daring to go out till dark, for fear any notice should be taken of him. At last, on the 25th September, the preliminaries of peace were signed. Lewis XIV. promised to recognize the Queen's title and the Protestant Succession, and to take steps to prevent the crowns of France and Spain from being united on the same head; but there was no question of the cession of the Spanish monarchy; he simply promised a secure barrier to Holland and the Empire, and hoped to satisfy the English by decided commercial advantages.

Lord Raby, who had been made Earl of Strafford in order that he might be more subservient to the will of the Ministers, was given a copy of the preliminaries to carry over to Holland; but in this copy some of the conditions offered to Eng-

land, which the Ministers feared might excite the jealousy of Holland, were omitted. Though the whole matter had been kept most carefully secret, rumours had got abroad and reached Marlborough. He asked Oxford for fuller information, and Oxford, with pretended sincerity, told him something, but gave him to understand that the negotiations had not yet proceeded any length. He affected to enter into his plans for pressing on the war, and to wonder at the backwardness of the Dutch. But the Dutch, who knew how probable peace was becoming, did not care to waste money and men, and threw all manner of obstacles in Marlborough's way, so that he was obliged to give up the siege of Quesnoy, and abandon his plan of establishing the winter quarters of his troops in France. Everywhere the war during this year had been unproductive of results. An attempt had been made to carry it to more distant quarters, and an expedition had been sent against Quebec, under the command of one of Mrs. Masham's brothers; but the ships were scattered by a storm, and returned home without doing anything. Affairs in Spain looked worse than ever. Charles had gone to Austria, and had been duly elected Emperor. This brought a new difficulty before the Allies. They were fighting to prevent the preponderance of the House of Bourbon in Europe; but if Spain were now gained for Charles, he would rule over a kingdom vaster in extent than that of Charles V., and all that

would be gained by the war would be the preponderance of the House of Austria instead of the House of Bourbon. It cannot be wondered at therefore that neither England nor Holland were very anxious to aid the ambitious schemes of Austria, more especially as Austria suffered more and more of the burden of the war to fall upon them, whilst she herself did nothing.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Fall of Marlborough.

IN England the secret of the peace negotiations at last came out. On October 13 the *Daily Courant* published the preliminaries of peace which had been arranged between Mesnager and the Ministers. A copy had been given to Count Gallas, the Imperial Minister, and he, in his indignation at the way in which the claims of his master were treated in the preliminaries, sent the document, which had been communicated to him on terms of the strictest secrecy, to the *Daily Courant*. The Ministers could visit their displeasure on Gallas by dismissing him ignominiously from the Court, but it was more difficult to undo the evil effect of a premature disclosure of their plans. A host of Whig pamphleteers, urged on by the Duchess of Marlborough and the Whig leaders, attacked the Government and the proposed peace with extreme virulence. The Ministers, annoyed by these attacks, did their utmost to suppress the Whig writers. St. John boasted to the Queen that he had found out fifteen

and seized thirteen. The Government could not be expected to be as vigorous in their punishment of the libels published on their opponents. Marlborough had not learnt to bear with patience the attacks made upon him. His conduct of the last campaign had been violently criticised; men and treasure were said to have been wasted on nothing; crossing the enemy's lines at Bouchain was compared to crossing a kennel. Marlborough in the bitterness of his spirit wrote to the Ministers to complain, speaking of these attacks as giving him a mortal wound. Oxford answered in a tone of lofty superiority, saying, "As I know I am every week, if not every day, in some libel or other, so I would willingly compound that all the ill-natured scribblers should write ten times more against me upon condition they would write against nobody else."

But more serious accusations awaited Marlborough than those of "ill-natured scribblers." When he went to the Hague, after having settled his troops in winter quarters, the English Government had appointed Commissioners to inquire into the expenditure of the late Government. Sir Solomon Medina, the contractor for the supply of bread to the army in the Netherlands, when examined before these Commissioners, had stated that he had paid privately into the hands of the Duke of Marlborough a large sum every year for his own use. The Duke was therefore loudly accused of having enriched himself at the expense

of the public. As soon as he heard the accusations which were made against him he drew up a brief vindication of his conduct, and sent it to the Commissioners. In a few words he stated that in taking this sum he had only followed the example of previous commanders in the Netherlands, and that he had used it for secret service, to get intelligence of the enemy's motions and designs. He then stated, of his own accord, that he had been allowed by the Princes belonging to the Grand Alliance to deduct 2½ per cent. from the pay of the troops contributed by them, to be employed in the same manner; and he added, that "next to the blessing of God and the bravery of the troops, most of the advantages of the war might be attributed to the timely and good advices procured with the help of this money."

Marlborough soon followed this letter to England, and landed at Greenwich on the 17th of November. But he did not go on at once to London, for the 17th was the anniversary of the day on which Queen Elizabeth had come to the throne, and it was the custom to keep it in London by burning the effigies of the Pope, the Devil, and the Pretender, and the Duke did not wish to be mixed up in any riots that might occur in consequence. The Government indeed got up a story that the Whigs were going to make this day the occasion for a popular disturbance, which they circulated diligently, from their desire to make the Whigs appear the enemies of public

order. They called out troops to protect the city, seized the effigies which were to have been burnt, and published a long account of the pretended plot, giving out that nothing but their precautions had stopped a serious disturbance.

Marlborough did not hesitate, when he came to London, to remonstrate firmly with the Queen about the preliminaries of peace. The Whigs were delighted to find that they were sure of his support, as they were beginning to hope for a return to power. The Government attacked the financial management of Godolphin; but Robert Walpole, formerly Secretary for War, published a vigorous pamphlet showing the falseness of the charges brought against Godolphin, which produced considerable impression. This and other Whig pamphlets had done something towards shaking the credit of the Government. The Whigs also managed to profit by the discontent of the extreme Tories, who had never looked with favour upon Oxford's Government. A number of Tory peers, with Nottingham at their head, promised to support the Whigs in their opposition to the peace, if the Whigs would refrain from opposing the Occasional Conformity Bill, and to gain the support of the extreme Tories the Whigs were willing to conclude this bargain, and sacrifice their principles.

At this time, whilst the preliminaries of peace were being attacked from all sides, and even the Elector of Hanover roused himself to remonstrate

warmly with the English Government, Swift did the Ministry a service which assisted more than anything else the progress of the peace. He published one of his ablest political pamphlets, called "The Public Spirit of the Allies," in which he showed forth with great vigour and much truth the selfishness of the conduct of the Allies during the whole course of the war. He pointed out that the English were fighting for Allies who, all of them, had far more either to gain or to lose by the war than England had, and that yet the chief burden of the war had all along been thrown upon England; that England had always contributed more and more men and money, whilst the Allies had continually neglected to furnish their share, and had broken their most solemn obligations. He showed that England had fought long enough for selfish and ambitious Allies, and that it would be folly to continue the war in the vain hope of turning the Bourbons out of Spain. This pamphlet produced a powerful effect. It was published on November 27, and Swift wrote to Stella that it made a "world of noise." A second edition was called for on the 30th of November, a third on the 2nd, and a fourth on the 6th, of December.

Parliament met on December 6, and the Queen in her speech from the throne, stated "that notwithstanding the arts of those who delight in war, both time and place are appointed for opening the treaty of a general peace." Afterwards Nottingham began the attack upon the

Ministry, violently blamed the preliminaries, and proposed the insertion of a clause into the address, stating that no peace could be safe which left Spain and the West Indies in the hands of the Bourbons. The debate proceeded with much heat on either side. Marlborough did not speak till directly attacked by Lord Anglesea, who said that peace might have been made after Ramillies, had it not been deferred by some persons whose interest it was to prolong the war. Then he at once rose, and with great dignity defended himself from this charge, appealing to the Queen, who was present, to support his statement that he had always laid every proposal for peace before her and her council, while he affirmed with the greatest solemnity that he had always desired a safe, honourable, and lasting peace. "My great age," he added, "and my numerous fatigues in war, make me ardently wish for the power to enjoy a quiet repose, in order to think of eternity." He ended by objecting to the preliminaries of peace, on the ground that Europe could not be safe as long as Spain and the West Indies were in the hands of the Bourbons. In the Upper House the Whigs, with the extreme Tories, had a majority, and Nottingham's clause was carried by 64 to 52, though a similar clause in the Commons was lost by 106 to 232.

The conduct of the Peers threw the Government into great embarrassment. Their friends gave up everything for lost; for at this time they were

again uncertain of the feelings of the Queen. Anne was still very fond of Mrs. Masham; but she was very fond too of the Duchess of Somerset, who was a Whig, and every one feared that the Duchess had gained over Anne to the cause of the Whigs. Swift was in despair; he begged Oxford to give him a secretary's place abroad, that he might be safe from the vengeance of his enemies the Whigs when they returned to power. The Ministers were supposed to be going to resign in a week, and through it all Oxford remained as smiling and easy as possible. He conferred constantly with Mrs. Masham, sitting, as Swift has it, and settling the affairs of the nation with her, and promised the agonised Swift that all would be well.

The conduct of the Duke of Marlborough, who had supported the Whigs with zeal in their opposition to the peace preliminaries, determined Oxford to cherish no more fond hopes that he might be persuaded at last to join heartily with the Government. The Commissioners who had before brought forward their charge of peculation against the Duke were now bidden to report their proceedings to the members of Parliament. To clear himself publicly from the charges brought against him, Marlborough caused the letter which he had written from the Hague on the subject to be published in the *Daily Courant;* and as it produced a considerable impression, two days afterwards, on the 29th December, the Ministers had the

report printed in the same paper. In this way they prepared the public for what was to follow. On the 30th December Swift writes to Stella: "The Duke of Marlborough was at Court to-day, and nobody hardly took notice of him." The next day there was a Cabinet Council, at which the Queen appeared, and ordered the following note to be made in the Council Book: "Being informed that an information against the Duke of Marlborough was laid before the House of Commons by the Commissioners of the Public Accounts, Her Majesty thought fit to dismiss him from all his employments, that the matter might have an impartial examination." The official newspaper, the *Gazette*, contained the news that evening, and at the same time stated that the Queen had been pleased to create twelve new peers. Oxford and Mrs. Masham had once more gained over Anne, by persuading her that they alone could save her from falling again under the hated dominion of the Whigs. By this large creation of peers, amongst whom was Mrs. Masham's husband, the Government obtained a majority in the Upper House.

The Queen wrote to the Duke herself to announce his dismissal, in the same tone that she had written to Godolphin under like circumstances, complaining of the ill treatment she had received. In a fit of indignation the Duke threw the letter into the fire. He wrote a proud and dignified answer: "Madam,—I am very sensible of the honour your

Majesty has done me in dismissing me from your service by a letter of your own hand, though I find by it that my enemies have been able to prevail with your Majesty to do it in the manner that is most injurious to me. And if their malice and inveteracy against me had not been more powerful with them than the consideration of your Majesty's honour and justice, they would not have influenced you to impute the occasion of my dismission to a false and malicious insinuation, contrived by themselves, and made public when there was no opportunity for me to give in my answer." He ends by saying: "And it is not my opinion only, but the opinion of all mankind, that the friendship of France must needs be destructive to your Majesty. . . . I wish your Majesty may never find the want of so faithful a servant, as I have always endeavoured to approve myself to you."

The Tories felt somewhat anxious as to the result of these vigorous steps. Swift wrote to Stella: "If the Ministry be not sure of a peace, I shall wonder at this step, and do not approve it at best. The Queen and Lord Treasurer mortally hate the Duke of Marlborough, and to that he owes his fall. . . . However it be, the world abroad will blame us. I confess my belief that he has not one good quality in the world beside that of a general, and even that I have heard denied by several great soldiers. But we have had constant success in arms while he commanded. Opinion is

a mighty matter in war, and I doubt the French think it impossible to conquer an army that he leads, and our soldiers think the same, and how far even this step may encourage the French to play tricks with us no man knows."

The creation of the twelve new peers was taken more calmly by the Whigs than the Tories had dared to hope; indeed they could do nothing but submit; and no notice was taken except that, when they first appeared in the House, Wharton sarcastically asked "whether they would vote singly or by their foreman?"

On the 24th January the Commons proceeded to consider the report against the Duke of Marlborough, and resolutions were passed, stating that his taking money from the contractors was unwarrantable and illegal, and that the 2½ per cent. deducted from the money for the foreign troops ought to be accounted for. Marlborough's friends urged him to appear in the House of Commons, and answer the charges brought against him; but he thought this beneath his dignity, and contented himself with allowing a vindication of his conduct, which entirely answered the charges, to be drawn up and circulated. He showed that the bread money had always been received by the Commander-in-Chief in the Netherlands, and that the 2½ per cent. was a free gift to the General, from the Princes to whom the subsidies were paid, and that he had had a royal warrant allowing him to accept it. The money had been used for secret

service, and never before had the secret service been so admirably managed. Unfortunately Marlborough had such a reputation for avarice that even this complete vindication could not quite undo the effect of the charges which had been made against him. The Ministers however made no attempt to answer his vindication, and they found it impossible to carry their prosecution of him any further. But his secretary, Mr. Cardonnel, was expelled from the House of Commons because he had received an annual gratuity from the bread contractors. These proceedings were actuated by the bitter party feeling of the Tories, who desired, now they were in power, entirely to crush their opponents. They went on to consider the conduct of the Allies, and censured the Dutch for not having supplied the troops and money promised by them; they declared the Barrier Treaty to be an infamous compact, and Lord Townshend and those who had signed it to be enemies to the Queen and kingdom.

The conduct of the English Government caused much alarm and indignation among the Allies, who saw that England meant to make peace without caring much what became of their interests. As a last hope Prince Eugene determined to visit England himself, to see whether he might perhaps be able to persuade the Government to continue the war. He landed at Gravesend on the 5th of January, to find his friend the Duke of Marlborough in disgrace; and though he himself

was hospitably received by the Court, he soon saw that his mission was hopeless. He was lodged at Leicester House, and visited by all the great men. Grand entertainments were given in his honour. As he passed through the streets he was always surrounded by an enthusiastic mob; when he visited the Court it was crowded with people eager to see him. Swift had a good look at him once, and described him as "plaguy yellow, and literally ugly besides." The Queen gave him a magnificent diamond sword, worth £4,500; but she managed to avoid talking with him about public affairs, and he could get nothing but compliments out of the Ministers. He learnt with indignation the charges brought against the Duke of Marlborough in the House of Commons, and was surprised to see the contempt with which his great friend was treated by a people who had forgotten all their former enthusiasm. On the Queen's birthday the people crowded round a chair in the park which they thought contained the Prince, but when they found that it was the Duke of Marlborough their shouts of applause were changed to cries of "Stop thief!"

Prince Eugene did not neglect the Duke because he had lost all his power. He treated him with the cordiality of a true friend, visited him frequently, and lost no opportunity of testifying to his greatness. It was the fashion to pretend that it was a mistake to credit Marlborough even with courage or any of the qualities of a great general;

and Bishop Burnet pointed out to Prince Eugene a passage in one of the pamphlets of the day, stating that the Duke of Marlborough was perhaps once fortunate. Prince Eugene emphatically replied, "It is the greatest compliment which can be given, for he was always successful; and this must imply that if in one single instance he was fortunate, all his other successes were owing to his conduct." Another time he was dining with the Lord Treasurer, who remarked that it was the happiest day in his life, because he saw in his house the greatest captain of the age. "If it be so, I owe it to your lordship," answered the Prince, alluding to the disgrace of Marlborough.

On the 17th March, after a stay of ten weeks, Prince Eugene left England, convinced that nothing more was to be hoped from her, seeing that he had not been able to get the Ministers even to discuss seriously the proposals he had brought from the Emperor. The Tories had not failed to circulate ridiculous stories about the object of Eugene's visit, crediting him and Marlborough with a plot to seize the person of the Queen and fire the city. Never had party spirit run so high in England. Even the ladies shared actively in the party quarrels; the Whig ladies would not go to Court, and the opinions of a lady might always be told by the side of her face on which she wore her patches.

The peace conferences had opened at Utrecht on the 29th January. The representatives of the Allies were amazed at the terms proposed by

Lewis XIV., who had grown bold again now that he saw what firm friends he had in the English Ministers. But matters became more complicated by a terrible misfortune that befell Lewis XIV. The Dauphin, formerly known as the Duke of Burgundy, Lewis's grandson, his young and charming wife, and their eldest boy, all died within a few days of one another of a malignant form of measles. This left only a feeble boy of two as sole heir to the aged king. After this sickly child the next heir to the throne was Philip of Spain. Even the English Ministers could not consent to any peace which did not make it impossible for Philip to reign over both France and Spain. Philip was called upon to choose between France and Spain, and though past events had showed how little the French were to be bound by treaties or formal renunciations, the English Government was willing to leave Spain to Philip provided he would renounce all claim to France.

Whilst Philip's answer was awaited the conferences were suspended. The English Government had protested that they would continue the war with vigour if peace were not concluded, and the Duke of Ormond was sent to take Marlborough's command in the Netherlands, and join Prince Eugene. They were at the head of a formidable army. The French were weak, half-starved, and badly supplied. Eugene wished to carry out Marlborough's project, and march into the heart of France; Ormond too was eager for

fame. The French were so alarmed that they advised Lewis XIV. to retire from Paris to Blois. But Lewis XIV. was not frightened. Messengers were once more busy between Versailles and London, and the English were busy devising new terms of peace. On May 10 an express was sent off to Ormond bidding him not to engage in any siege or hazard a battle. When Eugene called upon Ormond to join him in attacking the French camp, Ormond refused, to the immense indignation of the Allies. His conduct also caused much anger in England, and Lord Halifax called attention to it in the House of Lords, and ended by moving a resolution that the Queen would be pleased to recall the orders sent to her General. Marlborough seconded the motion, pointing out what a good effect it would have upon the peace conferences if the Allies gained some important advantage. A fierce debate followed, in which the opponents of Marlborough sought every possible opportunity of directly and indirectly blaming his past conduct. At last matters reached a crisis when Earl Poulet said, "No one can doubt the Duke of Ormond's bravery; but he does not resemble a certain general who led troops to the slaughter to cause a certain number of officers to be knocked on the head in a battle, or against stone walls, in order to fill his pocket by disposing of their commissions." At the time this insult was passed by in silence, the debate went on, and Lord Halifax's motion was lost; but twenty-seven peers, and Marlborough

amongst them, signed a severe protest against this decision of the House.

When the debate was over Marlborough sent Lord Mohun to Earl Poulet, asking him to take the air in the country, the customary way of challenging a man for a duel. Poulet, greatly alarmed, could not conceal his agitation from his wife on his return home. When she discovered the cause, she at once informed the Earl of Dartmouth, the Secretary of State. He had Poulet arrested, and orders were sent from the Queen to Marlborough to go no further in the matter; and the duel was avoided. But this gave the pamphleteers a new cause for attacking Marlborough, and the *Examiner* blamed him severely for setting the example of party duels.

Ormond's position became worse and worse. Stung by the taunts of Eugene, he had at last consented to join in the siege of Quesnoy. When that town fell, Eugene wished to proceed to the siege of Landrecies. Ormond professed to be offended that he had not been told of Eugene's intention before, and seized this opportunity at last for separating his army from Eugene's. He said that Eugene was deserting him, and when Eugene broke up his camp on July 16th, he ordered the English troops, and the mercenaries in English pay, to remain with him. The mercenaries indignantly refused, and only one thousand Holsteiners obeyed his commands. That same day Ormond proclaimed a suspension of

arms with the French. Bitter was the shame in the English camp; the orders were received with hisses and murmurs. An eye-witness writes that "the British camp resounded with curses against the Duke of Ormond, as a stupid tool, and general of straw. The colonels, captains, and other brave officers were so overwhelmed with vexation that they sat apart in their tents, looking on the ground for very shame with downcast eyes, and for several days shrank from the sight even of their fellow-soldiers. . . . Whenever they recollected the Duke of Marlborough and the late glorious times, their eyes filled with tears." The Dutch governors of Bouchain, Douai, and Tournai refused to receive the English army, and Ormond was obliged to seize Ghent and Bruges, and establish his troops there. His defection, of course, placed the French at an advantage. Before the end of the campaign Villars was able to retake Douai, Quesnoy, and Bouchain. Never has so deep a stain been cast upon English honour. The Ministers who had won their way to power like conspirators, made peace like conspirators, and did not care if they sacrificed the honour of their country, in order to make their own position secure.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Last Days of Marlborough.

AFTER his dismissal, Marlborough's position in England became daily more intolerable. The Ministry determined to bring a suit against him for £15,000, the sum which he had received by deducting 2½ per cent. from the pay of the foreign troops. They also encouraged the contractors for the buildings at Blenheim to sue him for the arrears, amounting to £30,000, due for the works. Both the Duke and the Duchess had always been very careful not to take upon themselves any of the debts contracted at Blenheim, and had allowed the works to be suspended, rather than pay the workmen themselves. Ministers who paid no heed to the honour of their nation, in their dealings with foreign countries, could not be expected to care for it in their dealings with a fallen political opponent, and so they did not mind saying that Marlborough himself must pay for works which had been undertaken as a free gift from the nation to him. So the buildings at Blenheim were left unfinished for a time, and the

Duke could have little hope of being able to finish his days there, as he had so often wished to do. The death of his tried friend Godolphin severed the last tie which kept him in England. Pressed by his enemies on every side, he determined to seek a little peace abroad. He got a passport from Oxford, allowing him to go wherever he liked, and sailed from Dover on November 28, 1712.

Abroad men had not learned to look upon the great General as a coward and a thief. A salute of artillery greeted him as he entered the harbour of Ostend, and the garrison was waiting under arms to conduct him to the house which had been prepared to receive him. At Antwerp, where he next went, he was met by the governor outside the walls, and greeted by the enthusiastic shouts of the people. He tried by choosing the most private roads to avoid attention, but it was impossible, for parties of horse paraded the roads to offer their attendance, and, during his whole journey to Aix-la-Chapelle, crowds flocked from every side to see him, and pay him honour as their deliverer. He stayed some time quietly at Aix-la-Chapelle, until, alarmed by hearing of a plot to seize him, he went to Maestricht, where he was joined by the Duchess, who had stayed behind in England to arrange their affairs. They went together to Frankfort, where they stayed some time. In May, Marlborough made an excursion to his principality of Mindelheim, where he was received with great honours.

When he got back to Frankfort he heard that the malice of his enemies had discovered more charges against him of peculation, and he at once drew up a refutation, which he sent to England. Meanwhile, all through the winter, the negotiations for peace had continued; and at last, on the 31st of March, peace was signed at Utrecht by France and Spain, with England and all the other Allies except Austria. By this peace Spain and the West Indies were left to Philip V., who renounced solemnly his claim to the French Crown. Lewis XIV. promised to acknowledge Anne and the Protestant Succession, and to demolish the fortifications of Dunkirk. England was to keep Gibraltar and Minorca, and also gained from France certain territories in North America, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and Hudson's Bay Territories. From Spain England obtained the Assiento contract, the right which France had formerly possessed of importing for thirty years four thousand eight hundred negroes annually into America. This was the article about which the English were most keen; in this shameful manner they hoped to recoup themselves for the expenses of the war. Lille and the other towns on the frontier were given back to France; and the Spanish Netherlands was given to the Dutch Republic, to be relinquished to Austria after the conclusion of a barrier treaty. The Duke of Savoy received Sicily, which was afterwards exchanged for Sardinia. Austria tried to carry on the war alone; but the

next year peace was signed at Rastadt between Eugene and Villars, by which Austria retained her possessions in Italy, Naples, Sardinia, and Milan; the frontiers of the Empire were left as they had been before the war.

These were all the advantages gained by the Allies from a war which had lasted eleven years, during which they had won a series of unequalled successes, and humbled the great power of France to the dust. This miserable result was due mainly to the conduct of Oxford and Bolingbroke, and their influence over the Queen and the political parties in England, aided by the cleverness of Lewis XIV. in taking advantage of the state of affairs in this country. The whole course of the war shows how disastrous is the influence of purely party government upon foreign policy. It is clear that peace should have been concluded after the battle of Ramillies, when France was willing to grant the Allies any terms they could reasonably demand. But the war was prolonged, partly to suit the interests of the Whigs, and partly on account of the great distrust felt by Marlborough, Eugene, and Heinsius for Lewis XIV. At last peace was made to suit the interests of the Tories, who were led by party feeling treacherously to desert their Allies, and make friends with Lewis XIV., even whilst still at war with him. In making peace they gave up almost everything for which they had been fighting. We cannot blame them for giving up the intention of continuing the

war until Spain was wrested from the hands of Philip, and made over to Austria. Time had shown that Philip had gained a firm hold upon the affections of the Spaniards, and to fight for the purpose of taking away from a people a King whom they adored, and imposing upon them one whom they despised, would have been an absurdity which could never have been crowned by success. Besides, circumstances had arisen which would have made it more dangerous to the security of Europe for Charles to rule in Spain than for Philip. Time also showed how vain was the fear that the strength of France would be increased by the accession of a Bourbon Prince to the Spanish throne. Lewis XIV. had considerable influence over Philip; but he found it hopeless to govern Spain from France. Philip had become a Spanish King, and cared more for the interests of Spain than for those of France. But though it was clear that Spain must be left to Philip, some care should have been taken for the interests of the Catalans, who had fought devotedly for Charles, and were abandoned without a word to the vengeance of the Spanish Government. Equally incomprehensible is the way in which all the advantages gained by the Allies on the northern frontier of France were given up, and an opportunity for reducing the immoderate power of France was hopelessly lost. Even more shameful than the peace itself is the manner in which it was concluded, the secrecy, the treachery to the

Allies, and the utter disregard of the honour of the nation. We can well imagine the bitter feelings of the Duke of Marlborough as he heard at Frankfort of the conclusion of the negotiations; and the news which he received from England caused him still further anxiety. In the summer he had removed to Antwerp, both to be nearer home, and to be out of the way of the hostilities between France and the Empire, and here he watched with anxiety the course of events in England.

Both Oxford and St. John, now Viscount Bolingbroke, were intriguing with the Pretender, who had been allowed to remain in Lorraine after the peace of Utrecht. The Queen was supposed herself to be inclined to favour the cause of her brother; she was repeatedly ill; her death might occur at any moment, and no one could feel sure of what would happen afterwards. Under these circumstances, Marlborough and the Whigs drew closer to the House of Hanover, and Marlborough entirely adopted their cause, partly no doubt from motives of sincere patriotism, partly because matters had gone too far between him and the Tories for there to be any hope of a reconciliation. The Electress Sophia of Hanover died in 1714; she had always rather inclined to the Tories, but had had great confidence in the Duke of Marlborough. On her death her son, the Elector, showed without reserve that he intended to make common cause with the Whigs. The Jacobite plotters grew busier and busier. Oxford was looked upon as too slow, and

not zealous enough; the Queen was growing tired of him, and Bolingbroke had managed entirely to gain her ear. Oxford was dismissed, and Bolingbroke hoped to bring his Jacobite plans to a successful issue. But at this moment, and before a new Treasurer could be appointed, the Queen fell seriously ill. Marlborough so keenly shared the general anxiety that he determined to come to England, so as to be on the spot to aid the cause of the Elector, should any disturbance occur.

At this critical moment Shrewsbury, who had always vacillated between the two parties, for once acted firmly, and by so doing secured the Protestant Succession. A number of influential men waited upon the Queen in one of her last moments of consciousness, and persuaded her to name him Lord Treasurer, to the consternation of Bolingbroke and his party. The Whig Privy Councillors showed great energy; troops were called out, and every possible measure taken to prevent a Jacobite rising. In the end everything went off quietly. Anne died early on the morning of the 1st August, and the Elector was immediately proclaimed as George I.

The Duke of Marlborough had begun his journey to England some time before. The Duchess was delighted; for she declared she would rather die in a cottage in England than in a palace abroad. On his way from Antwerp to Ostend Marlborough avoided passing through Ghent, so as not to attract

attention; but the chief magistrates came out to meet him on the road, and prepared a very handsome breakfast for him and his suite in a little village, at which one of their ladies did the honours. The news of his journey caused a good deal of commotion. Prior wrote to Bolingbroke: "We are all frightened out of our wits upon the Duke of Marlborough's going to England," whilst the Whigs were delighted. He landed at Dover on the very day of the Queen's death, and was warmly received; the guns were fired in his honour, and the mayor and an enthusiastic crowd came to meet him as he landed. On his way to London he was much mortified to learn that neither he nor Lord Sunderland were amongst the Lords Justices who had been named to govern England till the King could arrive. This slight was partially made up for by the reception he met with on entering London. The member for Southwark came out to meet him at the head of two hundred gentlemen on horseback, and was followed by a long train of carriages containing the Duke's friends and relations. So escorted he entered the city, amidst the shouts of the people, and drove to his house in Pall Mall. He appeared afterwards at the House of Lords, but soon retired to Holywell House, where the Hanoverian agents visited him, and tried by apologies to make up for his not being named a Lord Justice. He declared that he was firmly resolved never to take any office under Government again; the Duchess says that

she begged him on her knees never to accept any employment, and he retired to Bath.

George I. landed in England on August 18, and Marlborough hastened to join the crowd of peers who were eager to welcome their new King. Marlborough was treated with much distinction, especially by the heir-apparent, who had served under him at Oudenarde. The hopes of the Whigs were speedily realised; for the new Government was chosen entirely from their party. Marlborough listened to the entreaties of his friends, and consented to resume his former office of Captain-General and Master of the Ordnance. Sunderland was made Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and his other sons-in-law, Lord Godolphin and the Earl of Bridgwater, obtained offices about the royal household; whilst his daughter, the Duchess of Montague, was made Lady of the Bedchamber to the Princess of Wales. George I. could not avoid treating the great General with honour; but he could not forget his old jealousy of him, and remembered with bitterness how the Duke had absorbed all the honours of the war, whilst he had had only a very secondary part to play. Marlborough soon found that he had no real power in the new Government, and that he would no longer be able to play a leading part in public affairs. If we believe the frequent expressions in his letters of longing wishes for peace and retirement, he cannot have regretted this exclusion from public life. He spoke once or twice on

military affairs in the House of Lords, and his opinion always carried great weight.

In the autumn of 1715 an attempt was made in Scotland, and various parts of England, to assert the claims of the Pretender. Marlborough took part in the preparations made to resist him. He had the pleasure of sending his favourite, General Cadogan, to crush the rising in Scotland, and Cadogan was made a peer on his return.

Marlborough's last years were saddened by the death of two of his daughters. Elizabeth, Countess of Bridgwater, a gentle and amiable woman, died in 1714, in her twenty-sixth year; and in April, 1716, he had a still greater loss in the death of Anne, Countess of Sunderland, in her twenty-ninth year. Anne was, perhaps, the most remarkable of his daughters; beautiful and accomplished, she had shown the most admirable tact and judgment in the way in which she dealt with her husband, one of the most irritable of men, and her mother, one of the most overbearing of women. She had prevented political differences in the family from becoming feuds, and had lived on the most affectionate terms both with her husband and her mother. She left behind a most touching letter for her husband, containing her last wishes. She wished her mother to take care of her girls, and the boys who were too young to go to school; the Duchess gladly accepted, and made every arrangement for having the children thoroughly cared for. She also showed that she had her soft

side, by asking Lord Sunderland to let her have some trifle that her dear child used to wear in her pocket, and some little cup that she used to drink out of, and also a lock of her hair.

Soon after this great grief the Duke of Marlborough was attacked by paralysis; but he speedily rallied, and was able to go to Bath to drink the waters, which did him much good. In the autumn he visited Blenheim, to see the progress of the works. He had at last undertaken to finish the building at his own expense, but had waited till, in the first year of George I., an Act had been passed, declaring the Crown responsible for the debts on the building before the works had been suspended. In spite of this Act, however, the debts were not all paid; the Duke was personally sued for them, and it was not till after his death that the matter was finally settled by the Court of Chancery, and the arrears paid by the Government. Meanwhile, the works were carried on at the Duke's expense, and the Duchess busied herself actively to get them finished. She quarrelled with Sir John Vanbrugh, and after much correspondence between them, the finishing of the building was entrusted to another architect, and actively directed by the Duchess herself. Little progress was made till after the Duke's death, and though he always took a lively interest in it, it was not possible to settle permanently there, or do more than pay occasional visits. He had collected on the Continent many

works of art to adorn his palace. It was an age when great attention was given to the art of furnishing and decorating houses, and every rich man was an eager collector of pictures and all kinds of objects of art. Foreign powers were fond of presenting the Duke with fine pictures as marks of gratitude for his services. The city of Brussels gave him a magnificent picture by Rubens, the full-length portrait of the painter himself with his wife and child. The Emperor gave him two other paintings by Rubens, who was his favourite artist—Venus and Cupid restraining Adonis from the chase, and Lot and his daughters. The Duke of Savoy gave him a set of painted leather hangings representing the loves of the gods, which were long supposed to be by Titian, but were really painted from designs by Perino del Vaga. These have since been destroyed by fire. The Duke bought many pictures himself, amongst others a fine portrait of Charles I. by Van Dyck, which he found at Munich. Marlborough House in Pall Mall was adorned with a series of paintings by a French artist, Laguerre, representing the military exploits of the Duke. Laguerre also painted the ceilings and walls of the inner hall at Blenheim. A series of tapestry hangings were made for the Duke in Flanders, representing his own victories and those of Alexander the Great. Closstermann painted, under the special direction of the Duke, a large family group of the Duke and Duchess and their children, and during the paint-

ing of this picture the artist and the Duchess quarrelled so much that the Duke said to him, "It has given me more trouble to reconcile my wife and you than to fight a battle." The Duchess had to finish the works begun by the Duke. She added at her own expense the triumphal arch at the entrance, and the column in the park bearing the statue of the Duke, with the record of his victories at the base. In all £300,000 were spent on the buildings at Blenheim, £240,000 of which were supplied by the nation, and the remaining £60,000 by the Duke himself.

Marlborough passed the greater part of the last years of his life in retirement. He still attended the sittings of the House of Lords, and fulfilled the duties of his offices, but he was without power, and in no way possessed the confidence of the King. He lived either in London, in Marlborough House, which he had built in Pall Mall, or in Holywell House, the first and favourite home of himself and the Duchess, or at Windsor Lodge, paying occasional visits to Blenheim, to look after the building. He took special interest in the gardens at Blenheim, which he had helped to plan himself. He was fond of riding and driving, and very sociable in his tastes. He liked to be surrounded by his grandchildren and his intimate friends, and amused himself with playing games of cards, ombre, basset, and piquet. He took a great deal of interest in the education of his grand-daughters; they used to sing and dance before him, and some-

times acted little plays for his amusement. The Duchess was very careful of propriety; she would scratch out some of the most amorous speeches in the plays, and allowed no embraces. The splendid brocades which had been got from Brussels as curtains for Blenheim, were allowed to be used as decorations for the occasion, and even the sword which the Emperor had given the Duke was worn by one of the performers. Sometimes the Duke and Duchess visited the Prince and Princess of Wales, by whom they were always treated with much distinction. The Duchess writes enthusiastically about the Princess, and says that all the attendants at her Court were so civil, that she thought herself in a new world.

The restless spirit of the Duchess would not let her keep out of politics. Sunderland had now become head of the Government, and she quarrelled with him because he married a third wife. She managed to quarrel with most of her old friends the Whigs, and even with Cadogan, and so annoyed them with her letters and her remonstrances, and the violent views which she had no hesitation in uttering, that they were glad in their turn to give credit to a story of her having engaged in a plot in favour of the Pretender. She justified herself with much indignation, and when she found that the King received her justification rather coldly, her antagonism to the Court increased, and she entirely broke with Sunderland,

who died in 1722, rather more than a year afterwards.

On 27th November, 1721, Marlborough appeared for the last time in the House of Lords. He stayed the rest of the winter in London, and in May went to Windsor Lodge. In June, he was stricken with a violent paralytic attack. He lived for some days afterwards, and was quite conscious, so that the evening before he died prayers were read to him, and when the Duchess asked if he heard them, he answered distinctly, "Yes, and I joined in them." The following morning he died, quite calmly, at four o'clock, in the seventy-second year of his age.

His body was embalmed, and taken to Marlborough House, where it lay in state. The funeral was celebrated in Westminster Abbey with great magnificence. Military bands preceded the cavalcade, followed by a detachment of artillery, and a large number of officers who had served under him. The coffin was placed upon an open car, and on the top of it a complete suit of armour, and above a splendid canopy, adorned with shields and military trophies, and banners to illustrate the battles he had won, and the towns he had taken. The coffin was followed by a large number of the aristocracy, and an immense train of carriages. The service was performed at the Abbey, by Bishop Atterbury, amidst a vast crowd of spectators, and the body was temporarily deposited in Henry VII.'s chapel. After the nation had in this way done honour to

the memory of the great general, his body was taken to the chapel at Blenheim, and the Duchess caused an elaborate mausoleum to be erected over it by Rysbrack.

So passed away the great man who for a while held the destinies of Europe in his hand. He has been in turn held up for the most extravagant praise and for the most pitiless blame. In reality it is equally absurd to make out of him either a spotless hero or a mean traitor. It is impossible to explain away his faults, which are of a kind for which it is hard to feel any sympathy; but, on the other hand, it is impossible not to be impressed more and more by his great qualities the more we study him. His military genius is sufficiently displayed by his astonishing career, and as a diplomatist he was equally great. He could manage men as well as he could manage armies, and in the same way could rule himself. In the midst of the bitterest provocations, of the deepest anxiety, of the most terrible excitement, he always remained calm and dignified. No one could ruffle his serene temper, no one could resist his winning courtesy; Lord Chesterfield gives him as an example of perfection in the art of pleasing. In a dissolute age he remained a pure and devoted husband, enduring with patience the overbearing temper of his wife, without allowing her to influence him unduly in important matters. He was a tender father and a true and faithful friend, as the long years of uninterrupted friend-

ship with Godolphin prove. Free himself from the vices of drunkenness and swearing, then so common amongst the very highest classes, he tried to make his soldiers sober and well-behaved. His camp was clean, quiet, and orderly, and his soldiers followed him with implicit trust and confidence. He cared for them in all circumstances; and his correspondence is full of instances of his desire to lessen as much as possible the sufferings of war. One little trait of his thoughtfulness for others is especially pleasing. He had a letter sent him from a young lady who was in love with a certain Comte de Lyon, then in England; and speaking of her in a letter to Godolphin he asks, "as I do wish from my heart that no body were unhappy," that the young man may have leave to spend four months in France to visit his lady.

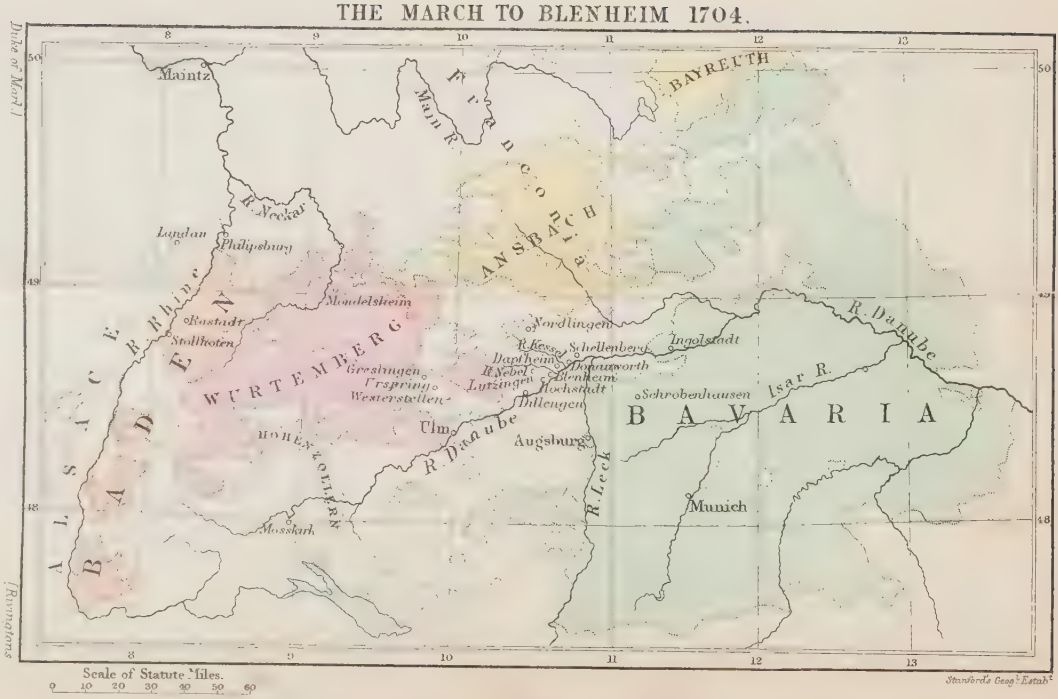
All his affairs were always managed with the utmost order; his soldiers were regularly paid, and he insisted that they should pay for all their provisions, and allowed no plunder. As a politician, he tried for some time to play an impossible game. He hated party squabbles and intrigue, and utterly disliked the way party conflicts were carried on by mutual revilings, suspicions, and accusations; for many years he hoped that it might be possible to belong to no party, and govern without party. But it was in the party intrigues of those days that party government first took firm root. It came as the

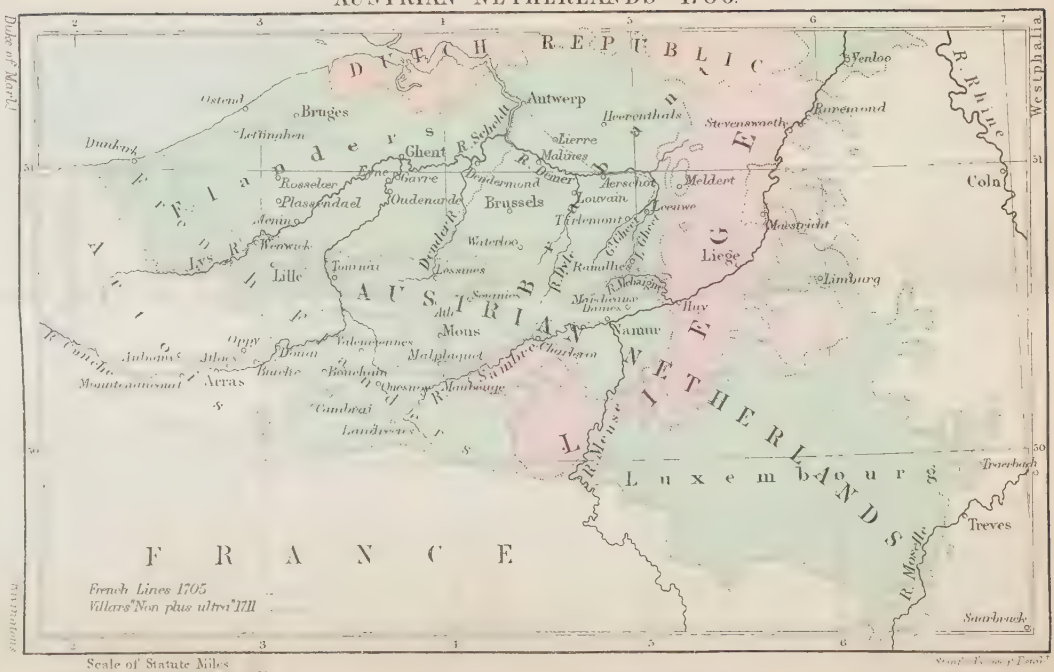
natural growth of parliamentary government, and was fostered by the spirit of self-interest which the Jacobite struggles produced, which made men lose sight of the good of their country as a whole, in the desire that their party might triumph. The political atmosphere of the times fostered Marlborough's bad qualities. He, like every one else, sought primarily his own interest, and so became a traitor to James II., a traitor to William III., and would have been a traitor to Anne could it have served any purpose. Self-interest, and the love of power and money, were the chief motives that actuated him; but besides these he was urged on by the consciousness of the danger of the power of Lewis XIV., which he had learnt from William III. He raised England, abased by the servility of Charles II., to the position of the champion of European liberty, and led her again to play a leading part in European politics. Marlborough's greatness must be judged by the work which he did, and the way in which he did it. The greatness of the work is not diminished by the fact that the motives were not entirely worthy.

Marlborough left behind him a large fortune, which proves the care with which he and the Duchess amassed money during the years of his power. By his will he left the Duchess £15,000 a year for life, as well as Blenheim Palace and Marlborough House; the remainder of his money was left to his different grandchildren. His eldest

daughter, Henrietta, Duchess of Montague, succeeded to his title; but as both she and her son died without issue, the title passed to the children of the Countess of Sunderland. Her eldest son was dead, but the second, Charles, became Duke of Marlborough in 1733, on the death of the Duchess of Montague.

Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, lived for twenty-two years after her husband, and died in 1744, at the age of eighty-four. Her wealth attracted new suitors, and in the two first years after the Duke's death she was asked in marriage by Lord Coningsby and the Duke of Somerset. She replied by saying that she would not allow even the emperor of the world to succeed in that heart which had been devoted to the Duke of Marlborough. Sarah, with all her faults, which were but too evident, had her good qualities too. She was a devoted wife; and though she often plagued her husband, it was only because she wanted him to play a great part in the world, and thought her way must be better than his. We hear a great deal about her faults; but she must have had her charms too to keep the heart of the Duke, both absent and present, so unalterably true to her.


THE MARCH TO BLENHEIM 1704.
Maintz
Main R.
FRANCONIA
BAYREUTH
R. Neckar
Landau
Philipsburg
ANSPACH
Mandelsheim
Rastadt
Stollhofen
ALSACE
R. Rhine
BADEN
WURTEMBERG
Grestingen
Ursprings
Westerstetten
HOHENZOLLERN
Nordlingen
R. Kessel
Schellenberg
Ingolstadt
R. Danube
Donauwerth
Blenheim
R. Nebel
Lutzingen
Hochstadt
Hillengen
Schrobenhausen
Isar R.
BAVARIA
Ulm
R. Danube
Augsburg
R. Lech
Munich
Masskirk
Duke of Marl.
Rivington
Scale of Statute Miles.
0 10 20 30 40 50 60
Stanford's Geog.l Estab.t


AUSTRIAN NETHERLANDS 1706.
Duke of Marl
Westphalia
DUTCH REPUBLIC
Flanders
Brabant
AUSTRIAN NETHERLANDS
Luxemburg
FRANCE
Ostend
Bruges
Dunkirk
Ypres
Ghent
Antwerp
Herenthals
Stevenswaerth
Ruremond
Verdoo
Lierre
Malines
Rosselaer
Plasendael
Oudenarde
Brussels
Louvain
Meldert
Aerschot
Coln
Menin
Tarlemont
Leauwe
Maestricht
Waterloo
Liege
Limburg
Lille
Tournai
Lessines
Namur
Huy
Mons
Arras
Cambrai
Treves
Trarbach
Saarbruck
French Lines 1705
Villars' Non plus ultra 1711
Scale of Statute Miles
0 10 20 30 40 50

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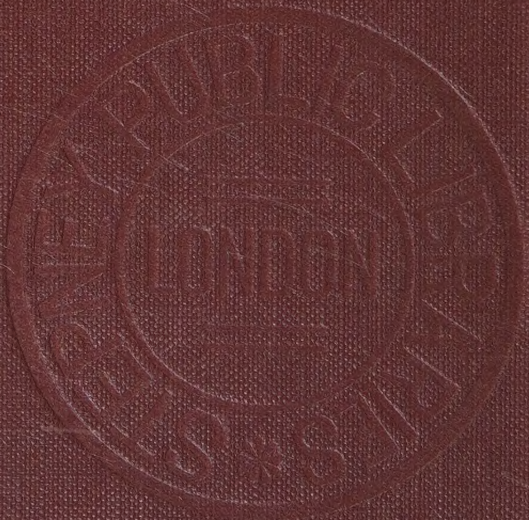
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